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THREAT™

EXPLOITATION  
A HOW-TO PRIMER



# VIDEOTRACK GUIDE

## FIGHTING BACK

FEMALE FILMMAKERS  
PULL NO PUNCHES

BETH B'S TWO  
SMALL BODIES

SARAH  
JACOBSON WAS  
A TEEN-AGE  
SERIAL KILLER

ACID  
CASUALTIES  
CAPTURED ON  
CAMERA

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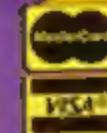
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MALICIOUS INTENTIONS



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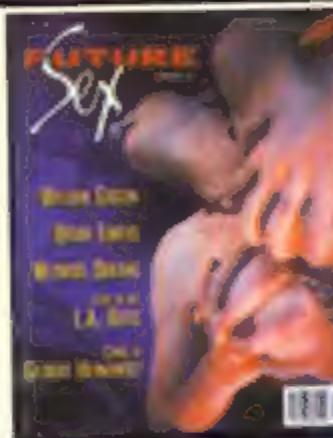


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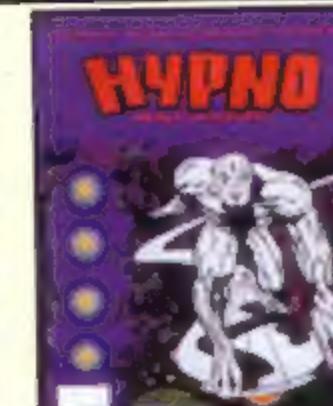
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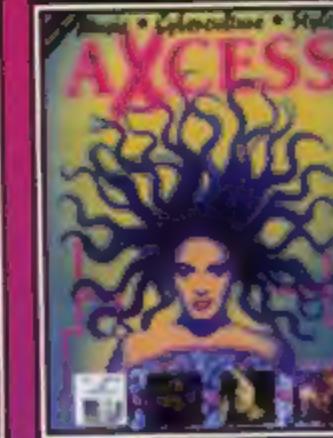
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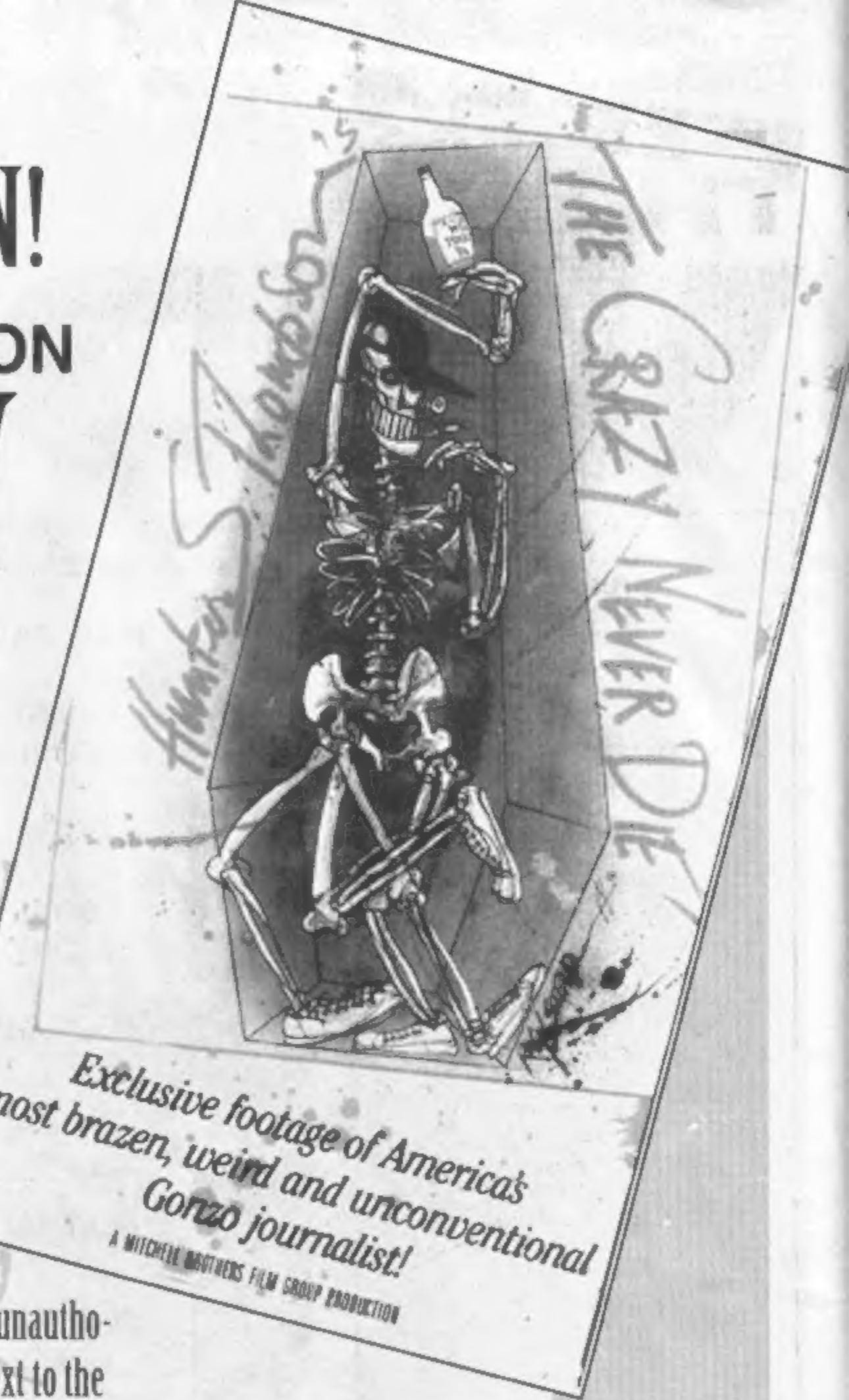
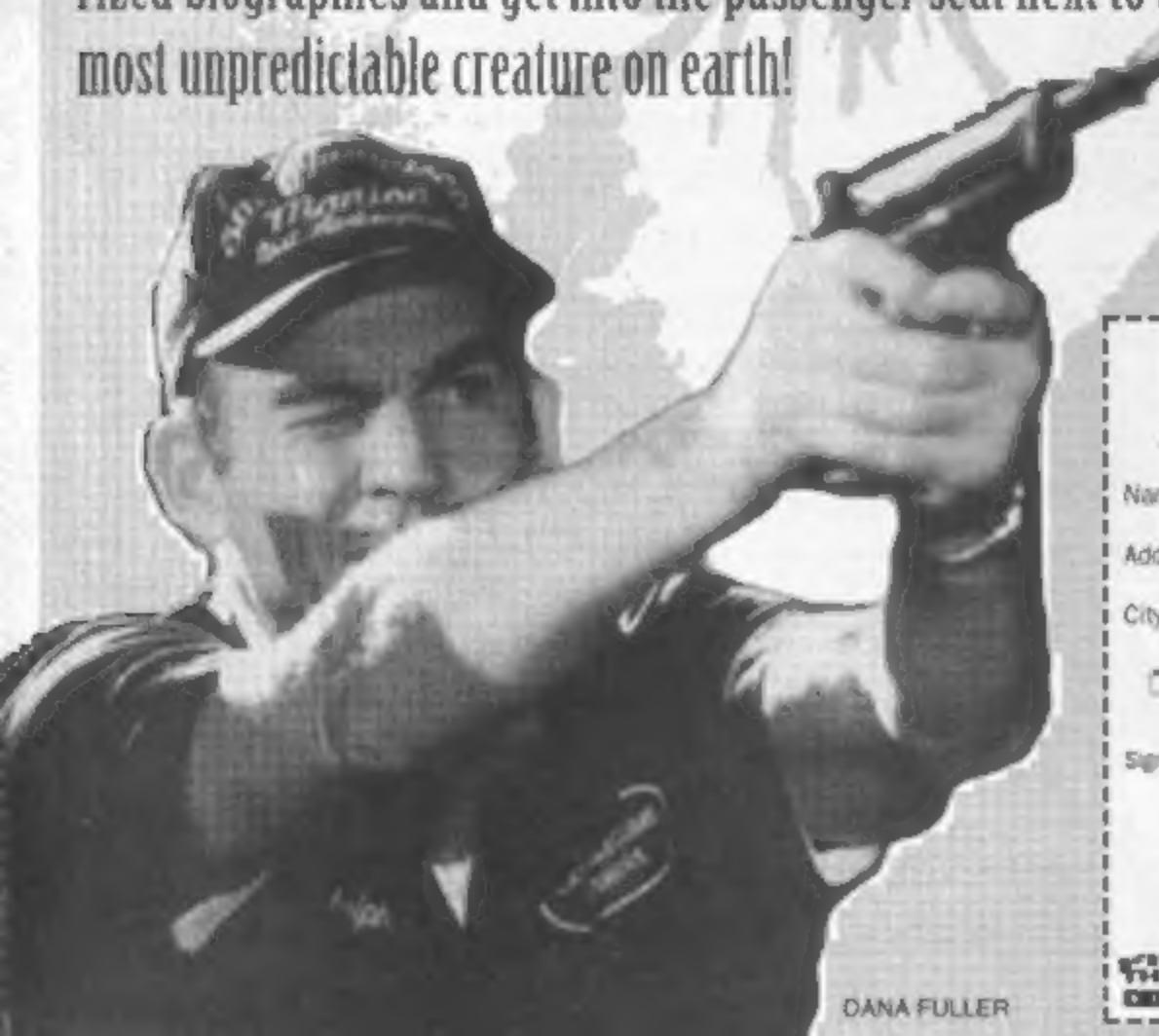
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# FILM THREAT™

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# VIDEO GUIDE

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COVER  
CHRISTINE MARTIN OFFERS HER CHARMS.  
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## FEMALE FILMMAKERS Issue

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"The effects are gory, the acting good and Simon was great . . . order the pizza, get the beer and give Dead Meat a try."  
— Salvatore Cangemi, *Independent Video*

"Great Blood Feast of the 90s" — Tom Brown — *Drive-In Cinema*

"This film is worth viewing, especially if you like grisly, bloody murder scenes . . ." — *the Raster Man, Independent Video*



### Even flies won't touch it....

A mysterious serial killer known only as the **Senses Taker** is leaving a trail of bodies with each of their five senses viciously removed. As the bodies pile up, the police department finds themselves further and further from identifying the killer. That's when detectives Brice and Mentum—much to their own and their captain's reluctance—are assigned to the case.

Enter **Simon**, a seemingly mild-mannered and well-respected gardener for a local church who has more than gardening on his mind. He prefers to spend his quiet days stocking his freezer with fresh meat for his pet piranha. Quiet, that is, until the Senses Taker's slaughter begins.

As the city's fear rises, so does the Senses Taker's media coverage. Proud of his "work" and tired of killing in obscurity, Simon decides he wants a piece of the pie—and the battle for the top story on the nightly news begins.

The body count rises, and the pressure is on Brice and Mentum to sift through the meager clues and catch their killer. Or killers. Are they solving the crime, or is someone leading them in circles?

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and relatives will want one, too, so extras are available  
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## MAIL BAG

Soon after we ran a notice regarding an upcoming (and ill-fated) Survival Research Laboratories show in Oakland, CA, this letter came in from SRL director Mark Pauline.

### ANOTHER NO SHOW



Dave Williams

Thanks for the ad and the plug. Unfortunately, once we began in earnest to set up our site, the owner of a company located near us panicked to the extent that he harangued the owner of the property and was able to convince him to void our lease. He then contacted the police and attempted to have me and the 20 or so SRL crew arrested for trespassing. We didn't get arrested but had no luck getting the owner to reconsider. I'm disgusted and am going to work on setting up shows in Europe for '94. I'd love to do a show in the US but this attempt cost me a lot and was a total bust all because of one paranoid creep. If you know of anyone who might be interested in an SRL production either in the US or Europe, please let me know. We work cheap. Thanks again

YT Mark Pauline

Sadly, the twin demons of money and authorization continue to plague SRL from staging shows here in the US—making their performance evident the lone route for anyone to experience their particular brand of technical wizardry. Stay tuned for updates on this situation as it changes—if it ever does.

### SUB-MISSION

Dear Sirs:

I've seen FTVG #9 on the newsstands already, but I've not received my copy yet so, what's the hold up here?

Joe Titus

P.O. Box 2875 Country Club Hills IL

Joe,

We mail out subscriptions the same day we receive the issue from our printer. However, to keep costs down, subs are mailed 4th class, which takes 10-15 days, while newsstand copies are sent by UPS, which generally only takes 2-5 days to arrive. The only way to alter the situation is to raise sub prices—which we won't do.

### YOU'VE GOT ME

Dear Dave,

I am in receipt of the new issue of FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE (#9). I see that the 1st Annual NY Underground film festival will feature you as a "celebrity" judge. Excuse me, but what qualifies you to be a "celebrity judge?" The favor of a reply is requested.

Sincerely,  
Garth Davies

Garth,  
I said "Yes."

## ANOTHER WHINING BOOTLEG BUYER

FILM THREAT

RE: "WE'RE NOT SORRY" EDITORIAL FTV #8

ARE WE TO BELIEVE THAT NO ONE ON THE FT STAFF HAS EVER PURCHASED A BOOTLEG VIDEO?

I SEE YOU NOW OFFER A COPY OF DERANGED IN YOUR MAG. THIS IS GREAT CONSIDERING IT'S LONG OVERDUE. FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS A COPY COULD HAVE BEEN PURCHASED FROM THE GORE GAZETTE (FOR HALF THE FT PRICE). A COPY THAT WAS TAKEN FROM A 35MM PRINT! EVEN NOW THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF ULTRA-RARE VIDEOS (FULCI, D'AMATO, WOO, FRANCO, NOT TO MENTION HONG KONG RARITIES AND COUNTLESS OTHERS) THAT ARE JUST NOT AVAILABLE LEGALLY FOR RENT OR SALE! HAS THE FT STAFF AVOIDED WATCHING JOHN WOO'S CONSIDERABLE LIST OF FILMS JUST BECAUSE THE MAJORITY ARE NOT OBTAINABLE THROUGH "LEGAL" MEANS? I'M SURE FEW PEOPLE WANT TO WAIT. AND DON'T TELL ME "WELL LOOK AT US, WE GOT OUR SHIT TOGETHER AND LEGALLY RELEASED DERANGED (20 YEARS LATER) WHY DON'T YOU CRY BABIES DO IT TOO?" WHAT IF I HAPPEN TO BE A 15 YEAR OLD FILM FAN IN NOWHERE U.S.A.? YOUR "WE DID IT BECAUSE WE'RE SO RIGHTOUS" DOESN'T WASH. EVEN THE BOOTLEG DEVILS DESERVE THEIR DUE!

MIKE DECKER  
(BOOTLEG WATCHER)  
90 VALLEY RD.  
BUTLER, N.J.  
07405

Mike,  
*We traded for ours. But if you're stupid enough to give issue like-minded moron cash for their thievery, I guess we can't stop you. Our digitally remastered, letterboxed Deranged is producer Tom Karr's uncut version which has been unavailable (from anyone, anywhere) for a full twenty years.*

## GLAD WE COULD HELP

MASQUE CINEMA LTD.

Dear Dave Williams,

Thanks to FTUG's exposure (Issue's 6, 7, 8) I have found a distributor for three of my tapes, which in turn helped to raise money for my first shot-on-film feature, Transgression, for Masque Cinema Ltd.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I hope you could give our project a mention in one of your future issues of FTUG.

Thanks again,  
Michael DiPaolo

125 Broadway, New York NY 10005

Telephone: 212-254-8488 Fax: 212-254-4488



Michael,  
Thanks for the news and especially the 8X10 from your upcoming flick some of our lonely contributors can always use some fresh visual materials. Best of luck on the new flick and send us a copy...

SEND YOUR SCRIBBLINGS TO:  
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PO Box 3170, LOS ANGELES, CA 90078-3170

## NOT PROGRESSING AT ALL

WILLIAMS, GORE AND COMPANY,  
I LENT A COPY OF YOUR MAGAZINE TO MY  
VALUES TEACHER AND NOW HE LOOKS AT ME REAL FUNNY.  
SHOULD I GIVE HIM PEZ?

HARRIS SMITH

P.S. HOW COME YOUR MAGAZINE KEEPS GETTING PROGRESSIVELY  
BETTER AS THE OTHER "FILM THREAT" GETS PROGRESSIVELY WORSE?

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME,

DESPERATE PRODUCTIONS

1702 LAMONT ST, NW WASHINGTON, DC 20011

## TIRED OF MISANTHROPIC FANTASY



home movies

DAVE.

I PICKED UP ISSUE #9 PRIMARILY BECAUSE YOU  
WERE COOL ENOUGH TO WRITE BACK AND CLUE  
ME IN ON SOME STUFF. YEAH, I WAS DISAP-  
POINTED AGAIN (NOT SURPRISINGLY, AFTER A  
GLANCE AT THE COVER) BUT I DON'T WANT TO  
RANT AND BITCH ALL OVER THE SAME SHIT. THE  
SOCIALLY CHALLENGED OF THE WORLD HAVE EVERY  
RIGHT TO PROTECT THEIR MISANTHROPIC LITTLE  
FANTASIES onto BLOOD-SPLATTERED SCREENS  
EVEN IN SPITE OF THE BOREDOM THAT MAY EN-  
SUE. ALRIGHT! CHRIST, I'M SPOUTING DOGMA  
AGAIN. SORRY.

THE COUPLE OF THINGS I DID LIKE WERE THE  
SHORT PIECE ON "HENRY DIES..." AND THE  
CRAWFORD/PHILLIPS FEATURE. YOU DID A GOOD  
JOB CONVEYING A SORT OF GOOFY, SORDID  
FASCINATION (SO IN SUCKING UP, SO WHAT!?)

AND IT MADE ME GENUINELY INTERESTED  
IN SEEING THE FINISHED FILM. OKAY, BEFORE  
I KISS ANYMORE ASS ID BETTER JUST  
LEAVE IT AT THAT. LOOKING FORWARD TO #10.

SINCERELY,

JAY HOLLINSWORTH



Harris,

How does one "teach" values? Kick 'em in the balls next time! While FTVG continues to progress, so does FILM THREAT—but in different ways. Not everyone will like both, but that's why we made two in the first place: to serve separate audiences. (So send me the Pez.)

## WHO'S MAKING MILLIONS?

Dear Williams & Gore  
I picked up #8 because of  
a review I read and your  
magazine blew my fucking  
mind away. When I saw the  
Russ Meyer and Jello  
Biafra FT back issues,  
that was when I knew my  
life as a video viewer  
would never be the same.  
Fanzines give you shit  
because you tell it like  
you see it. What, do they  
enjoy looking like  
assholes or are they  
pissed because mommy  
won't let them use her  
car Friday? I wish you  
both well and hope you  
make fucking millions.  
It's bullshit when people  
say you're not real  
because you're making  
money.

~John  
Soltyn

John,

Although I'd make decidedly more by filing for  
unemployment, thanks for the encouragement.

Jay,

Thanks for the shot of you and the family. As you can see from this issue, we were a bit tired of FTVG#9's gore factor ourselves. But "gore happens," especially in the underground scene, so there will be more in the future. Fortunately, we aren't enslaved to any particular genre—just weird shit.

## I'D GUESS IT WAS A FLO-BEE CUT

Film Threat Video Guide,

I AM RESPONDING TO A REVIEW DIRECTED AT MY FILM "DEAD IS DEAD" IN ISSUE #8. LET ME POINT OUT EACH BIT OF INFORMATION YOU SEEMED TO GET WRONG.

1. I AM A PROFESSIONAL FILM MAKER.
2. DEAD IS DEAD IS NOT A DVD.
3. Doxital WAS mis-spelled.
4. THE FILM WAS INTENTIONALLY SHOT DARK AND GRAINY FOR ARTISTIC REASONS. HOW COULD YOU KNOW THIS - YOU NEVER BOthered TO CONTACT MYSELF FOR ANY INFORMATION.
5. THE MUSICAL SCORE YOU TORE APART CAME FROM THE LIBRARY OF J.R. BookwaHer WHO YOU LATER PRAISE!
6. THE BUDGET WAS \$2,500 NOT \$9,000.
7. MY NAME IS MIKE NOT TOM. DID THE REVIEWER GO bMIN DEAD SINCE WRITING MY NAME A FEW SENTENCES BACK?

KIND REGARDS

~~TOM~~ MIKE "Tupperware Coffied" STANLEY



DEAD director  
Mike Stanley.

From Mike,

I'm going to let you in on a little critic's secret: after viewing a film, we form what is called a "personal opinion." Then, we sit down and write a review, much of which is based on that personal opinion. Whenever possible, we try to inject equal parts insight, critical analysis and something called "humor" (which you might want to look into). Together, these elements often make for an entertaining review for the reader, who, in the case of a magazine like FTVG, will seldom see the films reviewed. Therefore, as critics, we must try to convey our experience to them. I conveyed as best I could the experience I had watching your little movie. If you make a decent movie, such cry-baby tactics will not be necessary to garner public attention. A review is just one person's opinion—nothing personal, so don't make it such. By the way, your new moniker was the result of an editorial oversight, Bobba.

—Spiney Norman

## WANTS FREE STUFF

FTVG Kingpins,

I've noticed a continuing trend in your magazine to only cover (A) films I've never heard of, (B) magazines I don't see on my local newsstand and (C) filmmakers whose ugly faces aren't likely to show up on the cover of Movieline, Premiere, or even Chris Gore's Film Threat. What I want to know is (A) What do you do with all those tapes after you review 'em? (B) All those mags? (C) How do you get those morons to send you all that stuff for free?

Marcus Newly  
Akron, OH

Marcus,

(A) We keep the good ones, (B) we keep the good ones and (C) we print our full mailing address all over each issue. Good luck!

## WE'RE SORRY

Last issue's Shameless Plug! ("Heavy Metal Hell") confused director Wayne Kramer for guitarist Wayne Kramer of MC5 fame. Director Kramer also did not star in his film, BLAZELAND, but actor Mitch Hara did. "I can't make out whether your review was a dumb joke or just plain amateurish journalism on the part of the FILM THREAT team," angrily commented director Kramer. While it was probably both, we regret the errors and take full responsibility for any confusion.



## GUEST EDITORIAL

# WOMEN BLEED AND THEY ALSO MAKE MOVIES

**P**USSY POSSE. SNATCH PACK. LADIES LEAGUE. Someone's going to come up with a cutesy epithet to describe the bevy of female directors surfacing in the murky waters of moviedom—commercial and independent. They're going to get lumped together like the Frat, Brat and Black Packs; so let's just do what those misguided young feminist Riot Grrrls did and name our own disease—a hale little affliction, likely to infect the male ego.

Women calling the shots isn't a new phenomenon in picture making. Some of the biggest silent-film era directors were women, but they were pushed out by men who wanted to control the industry with the studio system. And like small boys who sulk when a pig-tailed girl beats them in a contest or a sport, big boys seemed to have made a concerted effort to keep women out of the game entirely.

In the documentary *The Silent Feminists: America's First Women Directors* (Direct Cinema Limited), about 30 femme directors were credited with making thousands of films during the silent era. Since then, while women have always been a force as actors, writers and peripheral players, their influence directorially can be easily ascertained by a quick flip through a Film Directors guide. Maybe one Mya or Ida or Alice with a short list of credits follows every 15 or 20 Davids.

But maybe, those numbers are changing. With every Tamra, Lizzie, Christine, Beth, and Casey added to the list of filmmakers working today, the public benefits by the wider choice of visions offered.

If we are mashed potatoes—and only mashed potatoes—everyday for a month, a carrot would seem like an unbelievable treat to our deprived tastebuds. So it is true with movies. Of course, that's no secret to FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE readers already hopped up on the unusual and in search of the capers and rutabagas of video.

Unfortunately, what should be an overflowing stream of originality from independent filmmakers too often is a dry, dusty bed. Most of the movies sent to us for review are just ultra-low budget imitations of Hollywood blockbusters relying on plot formula—stupid girl meets violent molester, bad guy attempts world takeover, loser gets ironic comeuppance. We also receive hours of visual experimentation—sans plot of any kind—which can only be described as the fingerpaintings of the film world.

Occasionally, we are treated to a masterpiece of creativity and production, highlighted in the Scan Section with a 9 or 10 FTVG rating. While we cannot expect every filmmaker to achieve such a high standard, we would like to salute those who do.

Which brings us to this issue. We want to acknowledge the feminine force which, by its very nature, creates with a different perspective.

A few of these directors are commercially successful, most are not. All whom we have chosen qualified to be included by her unique contribution to filmmaking.

Getting back to naming this group of talented women...how about Unhung Heroes, or the Dickfree and Damn Glad Brigade. Okay, Okay. So I'm willing to take suggestions.



Courtney E. Winfree  
Executive Editor

### SPECIAL NOTE TO VIDEO CUSTOMERS!

While most video orders are processed and shipped within three weeks after they are received, some tapes may not be in stock and require time to be reordered. However, if you feel there is a *real* problem call (818) 848-8971 and leave a complete message including your phone number and the exact date of your order or (better yet) send a postcard to FTV, PO Box 3170, Los Angeles, CA 90078. DO NOT call FILM THREAT magazine. FILM THREAT VIDEO is a separate company and only WE can help you. Thanks!

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# SCAN

*A complete guide to the films and videos sent to us that weren't immediately turned into "blanks."*

*(Just kidding, we actually review every tape submitted for our scrutiny.)*

*Edited by Courtney E. Winsfree*

## LA SÉQUENCE DES BARRES PARALLÉLES

11 min/16mm/B&W and Tinted

Marginal Video



Unlike the majority of films fashioned by the aspiring, the efforts of South African expatriate Ian Kerkhoff defy the norm by rebelling against the mainstream, embracing its trademark high production values and warping them around inherently subversive subject matter. (See the review for his compilation *The Films of Ian Kerkhoff* in last issue for further elaboration.) His most recent result, the title of which translates as *The Sequence of Parallel Bars*, is a progressively disturbing account of a rubber-clad minx (the haughty yet sublime Gabrielle Provaas) whose sexual curiosity is seemingly satisfied by a surreal stint of submissiveness in a darkened industrial cavern. From the very first shot, this production promises the kind of shimmering sexuality usually relegated to imported fetish mags, and *La Sequence* makes good in spades. The film



Ian Kirkhoff subverts his actress (Gabrielle Provaas) in *LA SÉQUENCE DES BARRES PARALLÉLES*.

quickly sets the tone of S and M fantasy in all its sleek, PVC beauty as a black Mercedes limo pulls to a stop outside an

abandoned factory and the nubile passenger exits with one exquisitely perfect, spike-heeled foot leading her way—

graciously planting itself on the asphalt roadway. Whoof. Nope, this ain't the gritty spooge-filled stuff of some NYC dungeon where blonde pixies wail on Hasidic Jews for \$200 an hour—but the most suggestively erotic episode to have stolen seven minutes of my life in recent memory. What follows is hormone-prompting agony as Provaas hikes her way up endless steel stairways to meet her faceless dominator and engage in a savagely abstract ritual of spread-eagled kinkiness. Purveyors of porn will be disappointed by the absence of nudity, but those who appreciate the aesthetics will be howling for mercy. Kerkhoff is currently producing additional sequences to construct a feature-length program illustrating star Provaas' increasingly turgid activities. Reports Kerkhoff, "Hopefully they will get raunchier and raunchier as we go." As for *La Sequence*, it is a brilliant start and, for once, I'm praying for the sequels. Look for further coverage in an upcoming issue.

—David E. Williams



### Plastic-fanged vampires in BAD BLOOD.

#### BAD BLOOD

88 min/Video

No Budget Films



I hate being unkind and cliché, but this vampire movie sucks. It's a feature-length shot-on-video production,

complete with a contrived script, cheeseball special effects (like bloodsuckers with dime-store plastic fangs and mime make-up) and a suspicious and out-of-place musical score by Tangerine Dream (yeah, like they came to your parents' house to record it, guy). The title immediately brought to mind John Landis' festering suckfest *Innocent Blood*. Strike one. Also, the "gritty and graphic" story, about "gangsters and vampires locked in deadly combat" was convoluted and didn't make much sense, again reminding me of John Landis' festering suckfest *Innocent Blood*. Strike two. Finally, it was boring—again, unfortunately, reminding me of John Landis' festering suckfest *Innocent Blood*. Strike three. If you're going to mimic a movie, don't mimic mediocrity. Or at least don't mimic mediocrity.

mediocrity. The film was dedicated to John Woo, leading me to believe (albeit momentarily) that the masterful Chinese director had passed away while I wasn't paying attention. Fortunately for his legions of fans worldwide, this dedication was just the filmmakers' way of citing their influences. Another not-so-special effect was a limp and laughable Woo-like firefight in the woods where the players fired plastic guns with sparklers stuck in the barrels. Again, *Bad Blood*'s cheesiness reeked apparent. It's possible that the early films of the likes of Sam Raimi are unavailable because they are a painful source of embarrassment. Maybe the kids who made *Bad Blood* will be successful enough to feel the same way about the 20-odd video films No Budget has made to date.

—Spiney Norman

### INVADER

95 min/16mm

The Very Big Motion Picture Corporation of America



In spite of its blatant indebtedness to *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Invader* is slick and easy to watch. I'm tempted to judge it more critically due to its large budget, the fact that ex-Cannonite/schlock purveyor supreme Menahem Golan is one of its producers, and VBMPC of A didn't provide me with any of the press materials I requested. However, I will be fair and say it kept my interest all the way through. A down-on-his-luck tabloid reporter stumbles upon a UFO government cover-up. He encounters alien-possessed human resistance throughout the movie; but, true-to-formula, prevails in the end. The



### PATENTED

# REVIEW VAULT

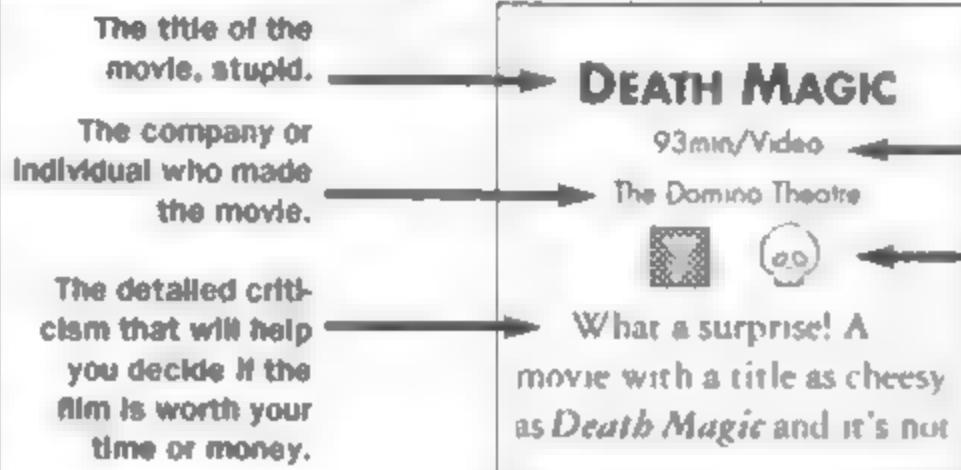
### RATINGS

- 10** Perfect! A must for any collection and worth twice the price!
- 9** Excellent. Definitely worth seeing and showing off to friends.
- 8** Great. We're jealous and wish we'd thought of it.
- 7** Very Good. Would get the filmmaker an "A" at U.C.L.A.
- 6** Good. But not "very good." Wait until you have extra cash.
- 5** A few good scenes, but only at the 7-Eleven security-cam level.
- 4** Dull. But almost interesting at scan speed.
- 3** Trance-inducing. Not interesting, even at scan speed.
- 2** Bad. You have a new blank tape for your growing 90210 collection.
- 1** Suck! No explanation necessary as you have probably gone comatose.

### CLASSIFICATIONS

<b>No Budget</b>	<b>Horror</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Classic</b>
<b>Low Budget</b>	<b>Nudity</b>	<b>Subversive</b>	<b>Animated</b>
<b>Big Budget</b>	<b>Arty</b>	<b>Surreal</b>	<b>Sci-Fi</b>
<b>Comedy</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Documentary</b>	<b>Pop Culture</b>
<b>Drama</b>	<b>Music Video</b>	<b>Instructional</b>	<b>Compilation</b>

### READING OUR REVIEWS



Running time and format.

Describes the content at a glance. Perfect for illiterates or those who just find reading to be a strain!



### Pointing to the way out of THE COMPANY.

film rises above its formulaic romantic fling and staple bickly relationship with credible performances, an even script, and steady, well-directed action. I would write more, but my memory for minutiae is not great, and rather than seeming like a glutinous smooching *Fargo* writer wanna-be proffering an "in-depth profile piece," I'll leave it at this: "*Intruder* is an even-handed sci-fi thriller with good performances and decent production values. Look for it at your local video store." Preferably not blockbuster, because they suck

SN

### THE COMPANY

40 min/Video

nada blue productions



The press release said *The Company* is about "Aaron Zimmerman's surreal journey through a world that baffles and confuses him." Confuses him? How about the viewer? I was thoroughly perplexed after watching *The Company*, an ultra low-budget (\$150.00) video project by the Minneapolis-based Todd Wardrobe and his nada blue productions. A jazz soundtrack drowned out all dialogue on my screening copy and was, at

times, inappropriately synchronized to the on-screen action. And what was happening on-screen? I'm not really sure. There didn't seem to be much of a plot. The video documents Zimmerman's search for "the solution." Many of the other characters claim to have "it," but ultimately (I'm relying on the press release for this summation), he formulates his own personal solution. The production looked skilled enough; but, again, without the benefit of dialogue, it's difficult to comment on whether or not the acting was any good. My guess is the producer/director's friends and family comprised the cast—and they did a \$150.00 acting job. To quote the press release again, Mr. Wardrobe said, "I have found audiences to be most receptive when under the influence of one substance or another." This could mean one of two things: 1) the chemically-altered mind is more open to the oblique; or, my choice, 2) people will watch anything when they're high. Although I hate to not get something, I'll have to just say "no" here and remain confused

SN

### THE MARK OF THE BEAST

22 or 80 min/FP-PXL Video &amp; VHS

Tray Full of Lab Mice Productions



Here's a perfect opportunity to have some laughs at the expense of the insane. Paul, a woods-dwelling hermit and the sole character of Matt Jasper's amusing short, dispenses a 20-minute soliloquy on the nature and origin of "The Beast" (he utters "The Beast" more times than Al Pacino said "suck" in *Scarface*). A self-proclaimed fugitive from the FBI, Paul has resided in the woods out-



### Oral grape stimulation in FORBIDDEN FRUIT.

side of Durham, New Hampshire for the last five years. He speaks about "The Beast" with absolutely no authority, instead illustrating his stream-of-consciousness lecture with all the skill of... well... someone who can't draw very well. *But wait... there's more!* Collectors who send Mr. Jasper "some sort of photograph of their feet" receive the

Super Deluxe Video containing more than an hour's worth of additional nonsensical ramblings and curious video fun. See D.W. Ashwander explain how he resurrected the dead. See "The World's Worst Poetry Reading." See Lisa Suckdog doing cartwheels in the park. With many of these scenes shot on a Fisher Price PXL, the effect is interesting and often hypnotic. Dubbed over some of the various images (of things like children at a carnival, Jasper's grand-

mother's death-bed scene, and amply-breasted women frolicking nude) is an amusing radio broadcast of evangelist Bob Larson trying to save the soul of a young girl possessed by someone called "The Keeper" (who sounds like Froggy from "The Little Rascals"). *The Mark of the Beast* is funny, a recommended addition to any library of video curiosities, and one of the best ways I know to spend \$6.66

SN

### FORBIDDEN FRUIT

11 min/Super 8/B&amp;W

Jeff Ragan



The amount of student short films that are about cockroaches is second only to the plethora of college thesis projects featuring masturbation. *Forbidden Fruit* falls



### No gimmicky plot twists enliven the generic *Road Movie*.

into the latter category of uninspired school-boy dreck with all the black and white moodiness that can be summoned by an angst-filled long-hair looking to become the next Jarmusch or Corman. A synth beat soundtrack follows a young buck's fantasy about a death rock chick, as he jacks off using a grapefruit. Oh! It's all coming together now: "Forbidden Fruit." I can just see this guy bullshitting through his first theory class. "The doubling of the primary image, fruit, objectified as both woman and member of the citrus family, causes our young hero to 'plant his seed' in an otherwise barren landscape. He is plucking from the fruit tree of desire." How clever! Yeah, right. This guy will probably end up directing a Mötley Crüe video.

—Nicholas Constant

### ROAD MOVIE

38 min/ b&w

New and Improved Films



To go along with the generic title of his film, writer/director Daniel Junge has created a generic story. But, let us use the euphemistic term *genre*. This picture is a road movie genre piece."

complete with a cool, photogenic car (often shot in wide-angles) and outlaw robber rebel types. This genre generally relies on the depth of its characters to keep it going; unfortunately, the characters in *Road Movie* have trouble getting over that hump of genericism. The guy is a confused, depressed, insecure,



### Another victim of Neo-Nazis in *The Last Wargame*.

overly intellectual recent college grad driving around aimlessly (pretty symbolic huh?) and pontificating too often about the degeneration of civilization. He meets a woman—a representative of civilization's degeneration—during his first robbery. She tells him he's boring and doesn't know how to have fun, but fucks

him anyway. After a brief romance, the two characters frolick around in what appears to be an R.E.M. video. Their differences surface as their string of robberies increase. Guess which character has moral qualms about their thievery?

Technically, it's a nice looking, stylish picture, complemented by an advertisement-style script. It's really a feature length story crammed into a short

format, the end product resembling a road-sitcom. Perhaps that's why the characters seem so shallow and one-sided. In a standard road movie, one idiosyncrasy after another results in wonderfully complex characters. Not so here. All I could hope for was a gimmicky plot twist to make me go, "man I never would have thunk that." But, it didn't happen.

—Jason Gonzales

### THE LAST WARGAME

85 min/video

Vista Street Entertainment



Three gung-ho guys drag their girlfriends on a camping and wargames trip to a forest doubling as a Neo-Nazi playground. The Nazis prey on the intruders, blowing away the bitchy, whiney girlfriend. Suddenly, our protagonists realize the Nazis aren't playing. The concept of this film is more exciting than its action. Writer/director David M. Spell should have left this idea as wargamers' Miller Time conversation and gone to work on a moving drama about sea-turtles. Most of the excitement is supposed to result from long chase sequences and the tension created by our unarmed

heroes being stalked by armed foes. Curiously, most of the confrontations end with the armed villain losing his weapon, followed by a hand-to-hand fight filled with hand-slapping sounds and groans of pain. On the plus side, it's clear the filmmakers worked with a low-budget. But, besides the eighty-five minutes of people moving and talking on the screen, there's not much holding up this do-it-yourself effort. The scenes have a haphazard look to them, and the actors seem like freshly recruited mall denizens. Additionally, the special effects deflate any dramatic potential with fire arms emitting nothing more than a "BANG! BANG!" and red splotches on victims leaving you wondering if they were actually using paint guns.

JG

### WHERE NO SUN SHINES

13 min/video

Michael DiPaolo



Fast cuts of whores, homeless subway dwellers, and various other street urchins are backed by the droning pulse of techno-industrial music. A shaky, waist-level view suggests that the filmmaker hid a periscope-like camera in his pants. Some of the footage is provocative, but most is just repetitive as DiPaolo wanders the late-night streets of New York trying to capture the city's underbelly—a sort of macabre *Funniest Home Videos*, only it's not funny and the only homes featured are made of withered cardboard. *Where No Sun Shines* doesn't quite deliver on its promise to "take you to places most New Yorkers fear to tread. The whores, hustlers and homeless up close and personal." But, it

# ACID CASUALTIES

With the perpetual popularity of LSD, tripping at the movies is still happening on both sides of the silvery screen.

by Cory S. Brown



The parody *Dick and Jane* is a bad trip.

## DICK AND JANE DROP ACID AND DIE

50min/Video  
Surf Reality



I'm sure the movie was more fun to make than it is to watch (someone gets credited for drugs). *Dick and Jane Drop Acid and Die* is a mock propaganda documentary about the dangers of LSD so deliberate in its parody and humor that it plays like a bad Three Stooges short with the slapstick violence edited out. A disclaimer (or what amounts to one) runs in the end credits informing us that the whole movie—except one scene—was shot in sequence in one day and all dialogue—except the narration—was unscripted. That's as impressive as the revelation that John Hughes wrote *Home Alone* in three days. IT SHOWS! On the plus side, *Dick and Jane Drop Acid and Die* made me laugh twice: Once when a laundry list of LSD aliases was tossed off ("Blue Dreamers, Blue Skies, Blue Moons, Pink Hearts, Green Clovers," etc.) and a second time when the only good line of the movie was uttered, "Hey Dick, nice turtleneck."

## ACID IS GROOVY, KILL THE PIGS

32min/Video  
Joe Christ



*Acid is Groovy, Kill the Pigs* is loosely based on the *Fatal Vision* story of an army officer who murdered his wife and children, claiming a group of hippies were actually responsible

Writer-director Joe Christ (Creator of such crap as *Communion in Room 410* and a basic blood-letting bozo—Ed.) stars as the ring-leader of this Manson-like family whose members ingest entire sheets of blotter acid and proceed to go on murderous home invasions. Most of the movie's violence is depicted by stills—effectively disturbing stills—of overweight nude women leaking blood and guts from different bodily orifices. Between gore excursions, Christ intersplices docudrama interviews with cult/family members. Each expounds on the "family's" punk-nihilistic, sociopathic way of life. The editing is awkward and the monologues reek of pretension as each member comes off like an Oprah Winfrey panelist. To his credit, Christ's own band supplies an impressively vicious punk soundtrack. Overall, *Acid* is absurd and disgusting. The comedy isn't funny, the suspense inept, and the story ultimately unrealized. What we are left with makes you want to bathe afterwards. I had to rent *Bambi* to karmically adjust.

## THE PSYCHEDELIC FILMS OF FRANCOIS MIRON

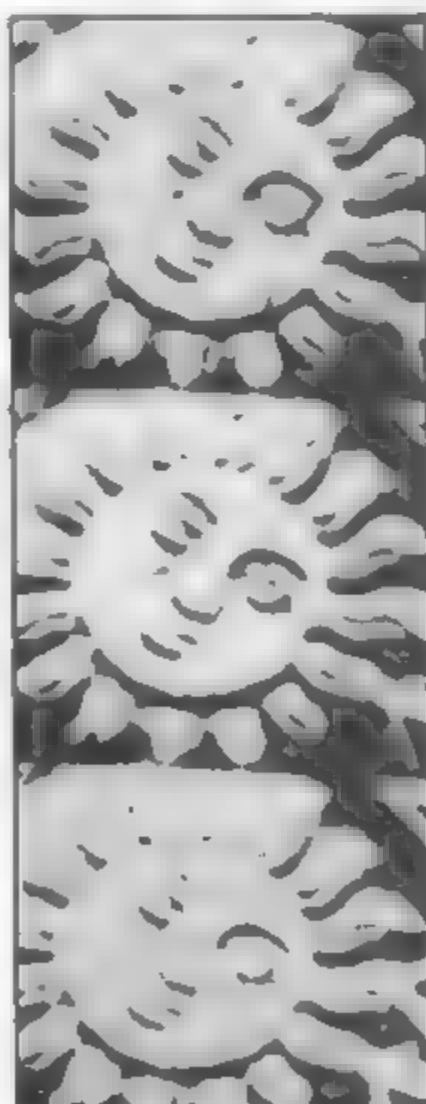
60min/16mm  
Francois Miron



Welcome to the mind-altering vision of Canadian filmmaker Francois Miron, a world of many colors in fast and nervous motion and blankets of sound sewn with cashmere and steel wool. Miron uses concentrated, colorful and strobe-like visual effects, adding old TV commercial footage, sound bites and the droning music of post-Throbbing Gristle avant-gardists Coil. The final results are highly intense and—I'd be delinquent not to use this word—trippy. Yea, sure it's arty conceptual stuff, but it is well executed arty conceptual stuff. Even in a state of sobriety, this collection of shorts is hypnotic. After an hour, though, hypnosis may translate to boredom. Of these three LSD related videos, only the films of Miron would actually be entertaining while under the influence of said drug. **MTV**



**Joe Christ eats it in  
*Acid Is Groovy*.**



**Multiple  
Psychedelic Images.**

# STILL FRAME UNCOVERING KINKINESS IN *CIRSIUM DELECTUS*

**R**IICHARD BAYLOR, MAKER OF the outstanding shot-on-video anthologies *The Holy Trinity* and *You Made Your Bed...Now Die In It!* returns with *Cirsium Delectus*, the tale of an outwardly mousey woman who's nuttier on the inside than a Snickers bar. After picking up a rail-thin, would-be punk hitchhiker, she proceeds with her twisted plot to incorporate the too-trusting drifter into her secret life of willing molestation, kiddie-sex and hooker capping. The 45 minute featurette, whose scientific title refers to the thistle, "a plant of stark natural beauty—belying sharp spines," is Baylor's best work so far and establishes his talent beyond the short subject stage. Hopefully a feature will be his next endeavour—he's laid the groundwork. **JMK**



① The mousey school marm takes aim on an unsuspecting hooker with her .357.



② Our too-trusting hero, enjoying the tart's oral ministrations, is aghast as hot lead narrowly misses his member.



③ The resulting massive (giving) head wound and very dead body.

does capture barely-clothed prostitutes running from cops. When a trumper for hire ends up in front of the camera, Dr. Paolo kindly and quickly refocuses back to the lingerie-clad dates with great bodies. Definitely, I'd rather these ladies of the evening approach my car at a red light than an unkempt guy with a filthy paper-towel and a spritzer bottle. At best this filmette makes you a voyeur—or worst, a stalker. Unfortunately, its success at disturbing is eradicated by the pollyanish final shot of the sun peeking through a cloudy sky.

—Courtney E. Winfree

## ALPTRAUM

28 min/Video

Envision Ent.



*Alptrum*, we are told, is the German language equivalent of nightmare. Such is what producers/directors Mike Lyddon and Jeff S. Turick attempt to create in this quirky piece about a couple with a mental problem—the husband. John, a slipped out Mark Hamill look-alike, spends most of his days at home—in the midst of complex delusions—while his wife May works her ass off supporting the two. Neither wants to continue the relationship, but they can't break apart. During their anniversary supper, John experiences several wacky hallucinations, including one where he plays volleyball with Adolf Hitler and Ronald Reagan on a beach. May confronts John about his ever-diminishing grasp on reality and he beans her on the head with a household object, making himself a widower. There are some fairly admirable traits in the film, some of which can only get better with money (most notably the special effects). In the meantime, however, *Alptrum* is good for a quick fix of psycho-babble fun.



**ALPTRUM** is a quirky piece with mental problems.



**Self-effacing wit highlights *Ashes To Ashes*.**

## ASHES TO ASHES

75 min/Super 8

Red Room Productions



Nearly all filmmakers aspire to greatness. Some are kept from achieving their fullest by dumb luck, a few can't handle the work, and still others are held back by a far greater stumbling block—lack of talent. With *Ashes to Ashes*, Green Bay horror fan-turned-filmmaker Paul Rinehard overcomes all those barriers, showcasing his talent as a young filmmaker of the non-slacking variety. *Ashes to Ashes* is a low-budget *Amityville/Poltergeist*-style haunted house movie about Jim Barton and his children, Keith and Wendy. Still grieving over the accidental automobile-death of the mother, the Bartons have purchased an abandoned tavern to renovate, live in and operate. Unbeknownst to the family, 50 years ago locals slaughtered a band of gypsies and their homicidal

—Jim Burton

# The River Ran Deep

A MEMORIAL FILM  
by SCOTT RUSSO

The loss of RIVER Phoenix was not only a great tragedy for Hollywood, but for the world at large. Few people realize the generosity this young man possessed.

His passing is truly a reason to grieve.



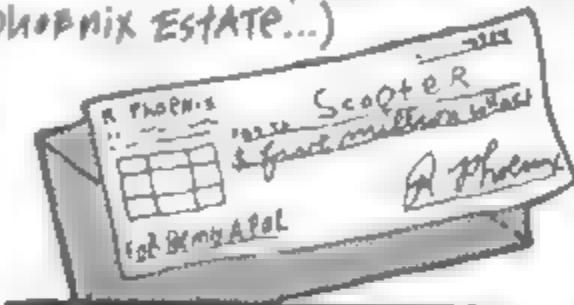
How many of you knew RIVER ALWAYS insisted on huge trailers on the sets of his films NOT because of a huge ego, but because he had a mini-scientific lab set up so between takes, he could continue his lifelong quest for a cure for the deadly AIDS virus.



HP WAS A VERITABLE MOTHER THERESA



While he lay convulsing on the cold, hard pavement in front of the Viper Room, his swollen beet red tongue cruelly blocking the life-giving air from reaching his gentle little lungs, he gasped out in his last vomit-soaked breath, "GIVE ALL MY MONEY to Scott Russo..." And for that I THANK him. (THOUGH I STILL HAVE YET TO RECEIVE MY CHECK FROM THE PHOENIX ESTATE...)



He spent hour upon hour letting SIV+ apes fuck him in the ass, he himself willing to contract the fatal disease to further motivate the dashingly young superstar to find a cure.



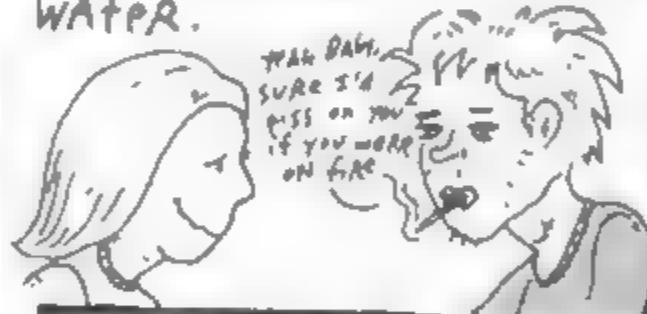
Like the bird of his namesake, he was consumed by his own flame. The mythical feathered creature however climbed majestically onto his own funeral pyre, to rise anew from the ashes, while RIVER, quite dead and destined to stay that way, croaked pathetically from fist-fulls of coke, a trough of speed-balls, a tanker truck full of liquor and a sack of valium.



SEE, MANY THOUGHT RIVER WAS JUST A STUPID DOPE-SNORTING PUNK WHO NEEDED A SHAVE, A BUCKET OF CLEARASIL AND AN ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, BUT HE WAS REALLY SO MUCH MORE.



NOT THAT THIS BOY HUMANITARIAN NEEDED ANY MOTIVATION TO SACRIFICE FOR OTHERS. RIVER ALWAYS MODESTLY DENIED this, but several Hollywood insiders admit they once saw RIVER selflessly give a drowning man a glass of water.



TRULY A GLORIOUS END TO A NOBLE LIFE. RIVER Phoenix is survived by his parents, Moon & Earth & his brothers & sisters, Leaf, Rainbow, Grass, Babbling Brook, Flower Pot, Garden Weasel and Chia Pet.

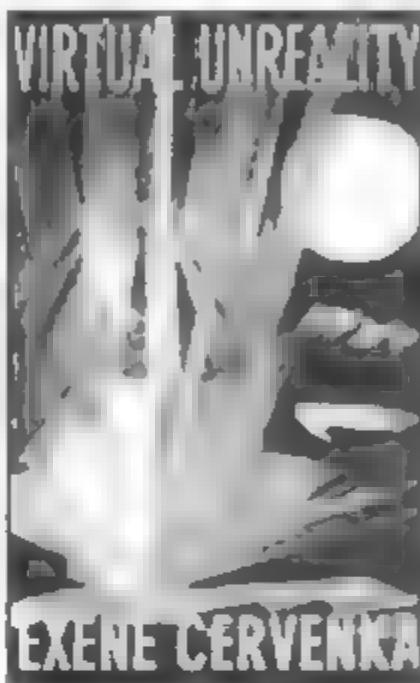


# BITCHY BEDTIME STORIES

*While we realize our readers are mostly scrotum-bearing and not particularly interested in women's issues, these books by and about pissed off female artists transcend gender lines.*

## VIRTUAL UNREALITY (2.13.61, Los Angeles)

Back when punk rock spewed pus like from L.A.'s underbelly (after New York and London exploded), Exene Cervenka and John Doe fronted X, one of Los Angeles' earliest and most enduring contributions to that music genre. The band is dust (until the next reunion album), but Exene continues with music and spoken word. Unlike many of her successful rock 'n' roll siblings, Exene's musical reputation is only partially responsible for her popularity among poetry enthusiasts. Take the rap out of MC Lyte, and all you got is a couple one liners about me and you and we are two. Take the folk/country/hardcore out of Exene and she reveals a foundation of lyrical observation: *Chased by the blessings and whipped up wishes of man-made weather. Soaked to the skin by their tongue's imaginings.* Much of the weight of her words is diminished by arty hand lettering she uses through half of *Virtual Unreality*. Pity, because her poetry—mostly about men and women—can stand on its own without the trappings of fancy typesetting as easily as it can without a backbeat.



Exene has a handle on post-X life.

## SHOCK TREATMENT

(City Lights Publishers, San Francisco)

Karen Finley wrestles with personal monsters and *Shock Treatment* makes us give a shit because Finley's outrage is not totally self-serving. Without beating us over the head, she conveys in her prose and poetry a sense of urgency. Tackling oppression and inhumanity, Finley bitches with a purpose, offering solutions that don't end with the annihilation of her enemies. Humor isn't absent from *Shock Treatment* although the author is unmistakably serious in her condemnation of abusive people and practices. In the chapter "Three Women," Finley writes about post-menopausal women: *And as I was peeling myself my pussy peeled off. That night, my pussy just peeled right off. I went to my husband and I showed him my remains. This is it. This is all that is left.* And he said, "Oh, that's what pimento are. Just put the peeled pussy in a sealed jar and sell it for some extra cash."

Karen Finley gets a point across. Then stabs you with it.

## ANGRY WOMEN

(RE/Search Publications, San Francisco)

The same brain bank responsible for the notorious anthologies *Freaks*, *Modern Primitives*, and *Incredibly Strange Films* conducted interviews with a number of mavens who have twisted their fury into artforms. Andrea Juno and partner V. Vale lionize these women as they have a consortium of anomalies—without exploitation or excuse, but with a reverence and empathy. Fiercer feminists using pithy descriptions of themselves like "ivory-tower terrorist" and "post-porn mestizo" explain in their own words what drives them. Telling photos accompany each interview, so those of you partial to picture-books will enjoy *Angry Women* almost as much as the truly literate among us. Besides Lydia Lunch and Karen Finley, this textbook of rage-inspired femme artists include Kathy Acker, Diamanda Galas, and Annie Sprinkle. Always mindful of their presentation, Juno and Vale never just layout words like a one-course meal. Each chapter is tailored to the particular artist, with excerpts of her work, videography, and career highlights offered as appetizers, salad and sorbet. At the end of the interviews, seven pages of quotes by and about women proceed a catalogue of other RE/Search material. And the last page describes the symptoms of toxicity for each of the poisonous flowers bordering every page of *Angry Women*.

leader at the tavern. Venetian spirits haunt the Bartons but eventually turn on their evil-spirit leader who has been "keeping them from the light." Even though the film's premise is not entirely original, the script shows flashes of self-ettacing wit. And with a budget of \$4,000, Rinehard and producer wife Susan, have pulled off a praiseworthy feat—making a viewable and commercially viable horror film for less than the price of a used car. Footnote: The Rinehards' next film, the much-larger-budgeted 16mm dark comedy *All You Can Eat*, is scheduled to start shooting in the spring. Susan will serve in the slightly-diminished capacity of associate producer, as the couple's recent co-production, *Nicholas Hunter: The Baby*, takes up a great deal of her time.

—SN

## TWILIGHT OF THE WRAITH

75 min./Super 8  
New Gothic Films



Here's a fairly watchable horror film by Texan Mark Beal, a commendable freshman effort in the vein of Don Coscarelli's *Phantasm*. The plot revolves around the odd goings-on in the Opie-like hamlet of Roxins Prairie, Texas. The curator of the local museum is dead, and Chris, a local teenager, inexplicably attempts suicide. Upon his recovery, Chris and his brother Barry set out to find who, or what, is behind these strange occurrences. They discover a netherworldly bad guy using unwitting locals as incubators for the worm-like organisms on which he feeds. Shot over a period of two years and partially-financed by regularly pawning his plasma, Beal,

with his crew of family and friends, has put together a better-than-average entertainment treat for fans of the visceral, the macabre, and the amateur film. Though not worthy of glorious praise, the performances do not hinder the film. And the effects aren't stinky either.

AN

## BEAUTY QUEEN BUTCHER: IT'LL CUT YOU UP

120 min./Video  
Zorlow Production Inc



With eight (yes, 8) executive producers and 120 minutes of video footage, *Beauty Queen Butcher* reeks of excess like the fetid odor of flesh hacked off one of the beauty queen's victims. Bitchy high

school beauties humiliate Phyllis—the intellectual, orphaned fat girl—by anonymously entering her into the Slough Queen school pageant. The script is thorough, complete and action-filled but it suffers from over-camp and fat-joke clichés. Phyllis' geeky friend Cameron, sporting a milk stain on the front of his trousers, offers this supportive gem, typical of the dialogue throughout: "This is a chance to show you're not just a fat slob. You're also a human being with feelings."

Unfortunately for Phyllis, she lives up to her fat slob reputation with poor-fitting, home-made clothing and an unnatural affection for her cat Eartha, a barn to allergy prone, Barbie-clone Muffy who breaks out in spots from the animal's fur. Anyway, even

pageant coordinator Betty Prunish, a blue-eyedash-ed SNL Church Lady Lily Tomlin mutation, conspires against Phyllis, demanding that the other contestants destroy her. When Phyllis comes home one night to microwaved kitty parts splattered about her kitchen, she vows to avenge the death of Eartha. She brutally murders the reigning beauty queen (without blood or gore), so the runner up steps up to take the crown. That one is killed, and the next steps up. Phyllis slaughters each one until she is the only remaining contestant and, therefore, reigning Slough Queen. Dick, the P.I., solves the BQB case by matching a torn fragment of Phyllis panties ripped by one of her dying victims to the briefs



He's worm-bait in the watchable *TWILIGHT OF THE WRATH*

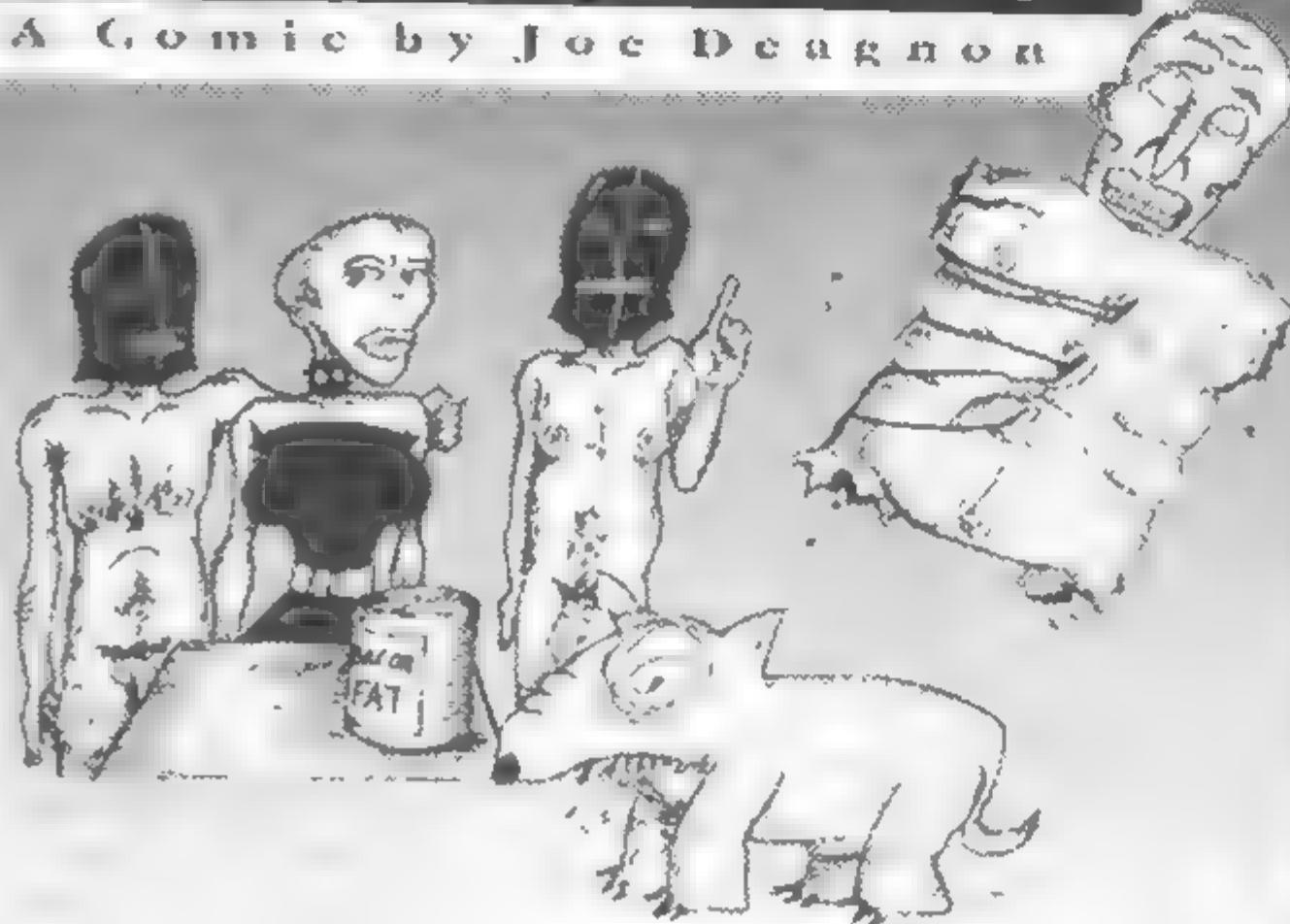
she's wearing as she bends over in a store. Sentenced to life, Phyllis' comeuppance occurs when Muffy's mother and a pack of women inmates beat Phyllis senseless and rip her torn panties from her fat body in effigy.

—CEW

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# IN THE WORKS

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## JR. LEAGUE JERKOFFS

Danny Plotnick, editor of the lauded (though infrequently published) *Motorboots* magazine and cocreator of the compilation tape *Small Gauge Shotgun*, is back with his brand of insolence in *Jr. League Jerkoffs*, which "painstakingly details all the crap little kids can get away with." The 25 minute short will be released this spring upon completion of Plotnick's *Minimum Wage Love*, an authorized adaptation of the Peter Bagge story "out of a really old issue of *Neat Stuff*." The story concerns two star-crossed lovers working "minimum-wage, dead-end jobs." Hmmm, most of us can relate to that. (And Danny, when is that next issue coming out?) For further info, write him at PO Box 460472, San Francisco, CA 94146.



Apollo Wallace terrorizes Ray Wilcox in *Jr. League Jerkoffs*.

## THE GIRLS IN THE BAND

Meanwhile, Canadian publishing/filmmaking magnate Candy Parker is raising funds to finish *The Girls In The Band*, her fabulous parody of William Friedkin's 1970 film version of the Mark Crowley play about an almost all-gay ensemble, *The Boys In The Band*. Publisher of *Fist In Your Face*, Parker shot in Super 8 with help from Bruce LaBruce (see FTVG #9) and this issue's cover gal, Christine Martin—who says "a PC lesbian analyst." Parker reports that the production has been equally harassed by "wymyn" who have said *Girls* is anti-woman, as well as men, who said I was a 'mater.' However, screenings of the promo trailer have gone down really well, so fuck them all!" For info, write Parker at 83 Markham St #2, Toronto, ONT. CANADA M6G 2K8 [REDACTED]



Nick Weed is a leather-clad fairy in *The Boys In The Band*.

## WHATEVER IT TAKES

90min/Super 8

Michael Quarles



Sexploitation is alive and well, thanks in part to Mike Quarles' amusing tale of a young filmmaker obsessed with that genre. *Whatever it Takes* follows the escapades of Chuck, your average, goofy, film-school drop-out, desperately wanting to follow in the footsteps of his hero. In Chuck's case, that hero is a retired nudie director named C.S. Calhoon whose only concern in filmmaking is keeping a good shot of a woman's chest in focus. Chuck goes to California, seeking naked women to film. After arriving in the Golden State and actually getting a couple of shots off, Chuck comes across a woman named June—a dead ringer for a Calhoon protégé named Marla McHenry. Chuck becomes obsessed with the young woman.

Unfortunately, there is no payoff with this sub-plot nor anything at all engaging about Chuck's heralded meeting with the infamous C.S. Calhoon. This film is about the great art of gratuitous female nudity. From the moment Chuck puts Calhoon's epic *Nude on the Range* into the VCR for inspiration, to the final shot of his own production, director Quarles delivers the goods in long drawn out fashion. During one seven-minute sequence, we get every possible variation of breast this side of *Jugz* magazine.

*Whatever* is soft-core exploitation at its finest, yet even the biggest chest lover tires of the country girl writhing around in a hot tub. Everything except the skin is of the poorest quality in this film. The lighting is bad. The color is bad. The dialogue is bad.



Sexploitation is alive and well in *Whatever It Takes*.

Perhaps this is an intentional bow to the exploitation gods of years gone by. The film is about naked women and naked women is what we get. Anything else would be trivial—and believe me, in this film it is.

JB

## THE DOUBLE DEAL

5min/16mm

Constant Motion Productions



Boy exec Michael is asked to deliver \$20K to an arsonist as payment for burning down some buildings so the company he works for can develop the property. One of the buildings scheduled for torching happens to be an old age home—a scene designed to

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# CIRSIUM DELECTUS

BY RICHARD BAYLOR



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illustrate the utter heartlessness of the inhuman, evil corporate empire. Obviously, anyone able to sit idly by while Wilfred Brimley bakes like a rib roast and falls into his oatmeal must be entirely beyond redemption. Before the arsonist agrees to do the job, he demands boy exec play Russian Roulette with arsonist's deaf and mute friend slumped in a chair looking like a Down's Syndrome version of Ned Beatty watching the *Beverly Hillbillies*. This is supposed to teach boy exec that the little people crushed under the enormous evil corporate workboots of capitalism have names and faces. At first, boy exec doesn't want to pull the trigger, but finally relents, blowing away the Beatty clone. Suddenly, boy exec's boss walks in to reveal that the whole thing was a test to see how far boy exec would go for his company. Boss lets him

know he did well and should expect to prosper at the corporation. Then in a wild O.Henry-esque twist we find out boy exec knew all along he was being tested. Turns out boy exec is exactly the crooked, hungry, ladder climber his boss is looking for. How ironic. Sound interesting? Mildly Heavy handed and simplistic? It is. The metaphors in this film have all the subtlety of a 2x4 with a rusty nail in it. The dialogue is absolutely ridiculous. The writer should go sit in a coffee shop for a day and listen to how people really

speak. The acting is wooden, but hey...that got Avery Brooks a megabuck job on *Star Trek*, so what do I know. Thematically, the idea of the big, bad corporation is played, and like a bad case of herpes just won't go away. A favorite doomsday scenario of liberals, socialists and commies everywhere, this theme of business grinding the common man into a fine paste without remorse should experience a powerful resurgence under the current political administration. On the surface this appears to be a decent amateur film without any great aspirations, but is more likely a subversive avant garde anti-capitalist manifesto of a new generation of socialist twits. Look for more films, novels and conspiracy theories of this ilk throughout the rest of the early 1990s.

—Scott Russo

## TRIBUNAL PRODUCTIONS AT THE JACOB JAVITS COMI-CON

90min/Video

Tribunal Studios

5 |

Actually having attended this comic convention as I did was torturous enough, but watching it happen all over again on video was enough to give yours truly twisted Nam-like flashbacks. Had I actually seen the three dimwits filming his near feature length freak show the day I was there, I think I would have set them afire on principle alone. The boy genius triumvirate behind this video abomination were all clad in cheesy sport jackets, looking like gay frat house versions of Mr. Howell except none of them had a classy dame like Natalie Schafer by his side. This grandiose epic comic book convention documentary with production values rivaling any Thanksgiving dinner home video is, unfortunately, devoid of artistic merit. Interviewer Shawn Heinze bravely defies the modern convention of having audio in an interview by constantly holding the microphone too far from everyone's mouth—including his own. All concerned appear to be doing tasteless Helen Keller impressions. In any other film, we might lament the lack of sound. But in this particular case, it may actually enhance the work as nobody said anything worthwhile anyway. Highlights of the lengthy string of dreary, poorly conducted interviews include comic artist Evan Dorkin brazenly trashing the comic book industry and using foul language (our favorite kind!), and an insane, muscle-bound black man spewing a seemingly endless diatribe on every-

thing from world politics and AIDS to promiscuity and war, all the while praising God. I found this film reminiscent of *Citizen Kane* in that I fell asleep during both of them, the only real difference between the two being that Welles had a much better tailor, and to my knowledge, didn't have a large insane black man in his film (as I feel all quality films should). The whole film is actually a ridiculous farce in that the majority of the questions the interviewers ask are about a film they plan on making but haven't yet, so nobody (including them) knows what the hell they're talking about. Even though it sucks, for the same price as a one day admission to the convention, it's a good deal because it allows you to get that whole geeky rush of seeing comics without having to endure the degradation of actually being at the show. For any comic junkie needing a fix but still wishing to retain a modicum of self-respect by not being seen at the event, this will be the best fifteen bucks you ever spent.

—SR

## MILTON'S LAUNDRY

38min/Video

No Money Enterprise

4 |

College filmmaker Dave Palamaro thinks his laundry is funny. You can just picture Dave and his pals sitting around their dorm room getting high and drinking beer. Hey, what if our laundry came alive and started attacking people? Voilà, a feature is born. Fucked-up college guys spawn a pile of intelligent laundry by spilling onto it a chemical concoction created by Milton, the campus nerd. Chaos ensues as the normally drugged-out college boys turn into tie-



chemical and simultaneously playing loud rock music. Palamaro has some talent. Portraying Milton, he scrunches up his face and whines a lot, but stays in character throughout the 38 minute running time. The plot is dumb and attempts at satire mostly fail, leaving the movie a rather humorless mess. The best part, and the one place Palamaro actually does some cinematic

prowess, is the scene where Milton's gym shorts attack a skateboarder. The editing and camera work here, while not first rate, are very promising. The effects are simple, not very imaginative, but carried off successfully nonetheless. Not bad for a bunch of college boys sitting around getting stoned.

Joe Shattu

### Tie-wearing physics zombies run MILTON'S LAUNDRY.

wearing physics zombies who can be saved only by loud rock n' roll. Milton is rescued from a closet where his buddies have imprisoned him by Josie the heroine of this featurette. Upon his release, Milton saves his former tormentors from the horrors of physics by squirting the zombies with an antidote to the intellecticide

### DEAD END

23min/16mm

Purple Cactus Productions



The press release for this film says, "...its tale of deadly fate with supernatural overtones recalls the commercial form of both *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and the *Twilight Zone* television series." It also claims the film has an "eerie atmosphere" and further proclaims it as a "psychological thriller." Once the videotape was in my VCR, I couldn't help but wonder if the person who penned the release (presumably the filmmaker) and I watched the same flick. This film is a silly little story of a gas station attendant who longs to be a rock star (which is, incidentally, the story of my life, so I'm sure). Some douche in a suit pulls into the desert gaseteria

and offers to pay this mook \$100 to drive him to Los Angeles. The mook agrees because, well, he's got nothing else to do and he needs cash (or the plastic surgery he plans to get so he can look exactly like publishing magnate Chris Gore). As they drive through the desert, the suit starts popping pills. A few hours later, after unsuccessfully trying to revive his benefactor, gas boy pulls over, opens the car door and watches as suitman's limp body falls out, head bonging on a rock. Gas boy panics. Naturally, he buries suitman without knowing if he is indeed dead. (I tried this once on my mother and she gave me such a pinch) Then gas boy drives to LA, assuming the identity of suitman (an easy feat considering that they neither look, nor sound, alike). Gas boy stays in a motel where he is haunted

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by a couple of spooks, presumably due to his guilty conscience. To get away from the ghastly specters, gas boy runs into the desert. Guess what happens. Suitman has somehow regained consciousness, crawled from his grave and is now seeking revenge on gas boy. How very original! How very frightening! How very silly! The story and dialogue were so goofy, I kept expecting it to break down into a cheap all-male porno flick with gas boy's boss being a more svelte version of Ron Jeremy (actually, he looks like a combination of Tommy Chong and Gabby Hayes), offering him a massage or a Quaker State enema or something. Too bad the filmmaker couldn't think of anything that original.

SR

## THE BODY

23min/16mm  
Hushion Prod.



In submitting a self-described "homage to B films," Ryan Hushion is one filmmaker who has finally set his aspirations at a realistic low. Can it be that someone has finally discovered the artistic merit in films made on shoestring budgets, with the worst possible acting and most ludicrous plot twists? You betcha! Emulating the too-obvious humor of a long, and often neglected, tradition of poor American filmmaking, *The Body* follows the mishaps of a seemingly jinxed man (overacted to side-splitting perfection). While driving to his sister's engagement party where he's to meet his future brother-in-law, the hapless hero accidentally collides with a stranger on a deserted stretch of New York highway. So as not to reduce the absurdity of this story line, our man does

not call for help. Instead he throws the stranger's limp body into the trunk of his car and continues down the road. This is only the beginning to a snowball of improbabilities (otherwise known as a plot) as our doubtful hero's problems worsen and culminate in a grisly murder. But it's not over yet! When he finally gets to the party, bet you can't guess who's missing. Sure this flick is twenty-three minutes of predictability, but therein lies its strength. Hushion doesn't back away from or try to avoid the most painfully obvious (and ridiculous) plot points but gives into them wholeheartedly, accentuating their humor. *The Body* also derives comedic appeal from its cliché and inappropriate musical score (borrowed from either the highest melodrama or Elmer Fudd's *Kill The Wabbit*, I can't decide), and the lack of dialogue, which lends a pantomime effect to the actors' gestures and movements. Although suffering from abrupt editing, poor lighting and, at one point, a hand (no doubt Hushion's) wrapping around the lens in an awkward attempt to fade to black, *The Body* is a terrific study of the lowest caliber of filmmaking.

—Steven Chain

## UNDYING LOVE

85min/16mm  
A Slaughtered Lamb Prod.



## SLIME CITY

85min/16mm

A Lamberson Clark Makowski Prod.



The plot of the fruitless endeavor entitled *Undying Love* concerns Scott, a young would-be suicide whose desire for death is quickly replaced by a lust for eternal life when



Unintentional humor and Brooklynese speaking vampires are among the detractions in *Undying Love*.

he meets a 200-year-old vampire named Camilla—who introduces Scott to an entire community of vampires living the high life in New York City. The group is led by Evan, a vampire elder, more powerful and sadistic than the others. Camilla is keenly aware of the immediate dislike the two men have for one another and uses this to her advantage by hatching a plot that will rid her of Evan and provide her with Scott's "undying love" (clever)...or so she thinks. Ultimately the plot is by-the-book predictable with absolutely no surprises. It sounds as if the actors' voices were recorded in a shower and the soundtrack, featuring second-rate message rap and Loverboy-inspired rock-'n'-roll from the early '80s, could have been lifted off the K-Tel *City Nights* album. And then there's the acting. Don't get me wrong. I've got nothing against New Yorkers, but for some reason a vampire just isn't a vampire when he speaks with a Brooklyn accent.

*Undying Love* is not a complete failure though. There is some funny (albeit moronic) dialogue. When Scott is questioned by a detective as to the whereabouts of Camilla, he asks innocently, "What would a hot-lookin' mama like her want with a bum like me?" The detective smartly

responds, "Bout ten pints." Then there's the climactic confrontation between Evan and Scott when the former quips, "I can't think of anything clever to say, so I'll kill you now." With funny lines like these, I wonder if director Gregory Lamberson ruined a potentially good comedy by making a terrible drama.

However, as Sam Raimi did after *Evil Dead*, one of the most unexpectedly funny horror films ever made,

Lamberson may have learned from his mistake in approaching *Undying Love* so seriously. With *Slime City*, he has realized his potential for making a horror film that capitalizes on its ridiculous (and downright funny) subject matter. The plot: Alex, a college art student, moves into an apartment building inhabited by members of an occult group. He soon discovers his neighbors want his body to be the new home for the spirit of their deceased leader. How can they make this transformation possible? Must they kill our hero? No, worse...they "slime" him by addicting him to the jelly-like "exoplasm" which, in combination with a potent elixir, turns the body into a wad of goo making it vulnerable to a foreign spirit. It's up to Alex to somehow foil their plans or else be forever slimed. *Slime City* follows a pre-

litable plot path, but the notion of a person slimed to a grotesque demise is somehow new and exciting. Werewolves and monsters are commonplace, but few of us know the tragic, tortured existence of Alex the sticky slime boy. And whereas in *Undying Love* the terrible music, cheap special effects and poor acting undercut the intended dramatic tone, in *Slime City* these same elements work in the film's favor, making for a hilarious tipstick slasher. Imagine a man running down the street in broad daylight, desperately seeking shelter as his body turns to a puddle of slime. Now visualize this same scene accompanied by the music of aging Casio portable keyboards (perpetually set on the *mba* selection) and fuzzy surf guitar. If you're not already in stitches, how about a scene courtesy of master special

effects artist J. Scott Coulter in which Alex, after being disemboweled, calmly and quietly collects his innards and places them back in their proper positions. Apparently, Coulter couldn't afford anything even remotely resembling intestines so, resourceful fella that he is, he substitutes hot dogs. This film is nothing to mark down on your calendar as a "must see," but if you happen to have some spare time and are looking for a light-hearted, sloppy gory low-budget fun fest, look no further, here it is.

SC

### THINK POSITIVE

18min/16mm

An 8th House York/Wien Prod.

[5]



Think positive, this one's only eighteen minutes long. True, some short films successfully convey a significant mes-

sage by juxtaposing images, subtly blending provocative music or employing some other tactic. Sorry to say, however, this ain't one of 'em. Director Rune Lind began with an intriguing premise, a study of the act of rape. The plot involves a young man meeting and fornicating with a young lady (simple enough). But the young man is obsessed with a desire to physically abuse women. Acts of beating, shooting and raping women pervade his dreams. Lind effectively draws an analogy between sexual abuse and animal brutality by interrupting the young man's fantasies with shots of cowboys holding down and branding a calf. So far, so good. Then the film spins out of control as Lind randomly adds stock footage images ranging from early 20th century immigrant families to a German beer commer-

cial. In addition, he uses a variety of songs—including the Budweiser anthem—that do nothing other than demonstrate his diverse musical tastes. The excessively broad variety of archival material and haphazard music muddles the film's central idea, leaving viewers hungry for the significant message *Think Positive* seemed to promise.

—SC

### TRAILERS FOR CLONE/NEXT STEP UP MUSIC VIDEO/ PUPPADERE

20min/Video

C Beta Fly

[4]



Filmmaker Carlos Batts has a grim vision. This brief video features a trailer for a film called *Clone*, a music video for metal group Next Step Up, and a short entitled

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Ozone is the latest horror hit from director J.R. Bookwalter as seen in *Draculina*, *Film Threat Video Guide*, *Screem*, *Fangoria* and now *Alternative Cinema*, the definitive guide to the B-video scene! Published quarterly, this 60-page magazine features in-depth news, reviews and reviews. Issue #1 features a 10-page look at *Ozone*, plus features on Roger Corman, the Missouri B-movie scene, *Girlfriends* and more! Available March, 1994! Subscriptions are \$15 for 1 year, \$25 for 2 years or you can find us in the shops. Please write for advertising information.



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*Puppadere*. Consisting only of words and a picture of a demented clown, the trailer in no way enticed me to want to see anymore. The music video is more interesting, featuring bad music from a group with a fat lead singer. It sucks. Batts focuses mostly on the band itself (a big mistake) distorting the images and color. Thrown into the video are stills of a young guy slitting his wrists. If only Batts had spent a little more time with those images, the video would have been better. Oh yeah, it would have been better if he had a different band to work with. The short *Puppadere* is haunting and surreal. A guy in a pickup truck drives up, takes a heavy plastic garbage bag out into the woods and dumps it. While he's out in the woods, a strange skeletal creature follows him. There's not really much going on in this brief film, but the mood creat-

ed is eerie and morbid. The skeletal creature, made of real bones and worked like a puppet, is a fascinating creation. The surreal film reeks of death and horror, but there's really not much to it or the other shorts on this video. (This is the third time Batts has submitted *Puppadere* in one form or another and we hope the last —Ed.)

JS

### DARKNESS

90min/Super 8  
FILM THREAT VIDEO



I'm not breaking any new ground by saying that vampire movies have become trite and uninspired in recent years, with mainstream pap such as *The Lost Boys* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula* driving deeper the proverbial stake of triviality. That didn't stop Kansas-based filmmaker Leif

Junker from taking a stab at this "dead genre." The result: a promising Super 8mm feature—*Leif Jonker's Darkness*. I give the young director much credit and praise for making the film with his own money and on his own terms. This meant taking grunt jobs and selling plasma (really) to complete it. He also stood true to his vision and did not conform to the standards of the fickle mainstream public. This meant no token nudity, no sap-laden romantic subplot, and no pusified bloodsuckers (a la Gary Oldman's Vlad Dracula). Jonker's vampire saga is both brutal and bloody, and it chronicles the splatter-soaked mayhem near-apocalypse as a group of young people attempt to stave off the nocturnal beasts and their insatiable bloodlust. Gorehounds everywhere should revel in the crimson feast that Jonker has



Gore fans will writhe in ecstasy over *DARKNESS*.

prepared, and quite affordably. I might add (for a more detailed look at the making of *Darkness*, check out FTVG #9). This effort is not without its faults, however, the most obvious being that it is not very well lit. Most of the action takes place at night, and there is just not enough light, resulting in viewer eye-strain. Another major factor in grading the film was the script

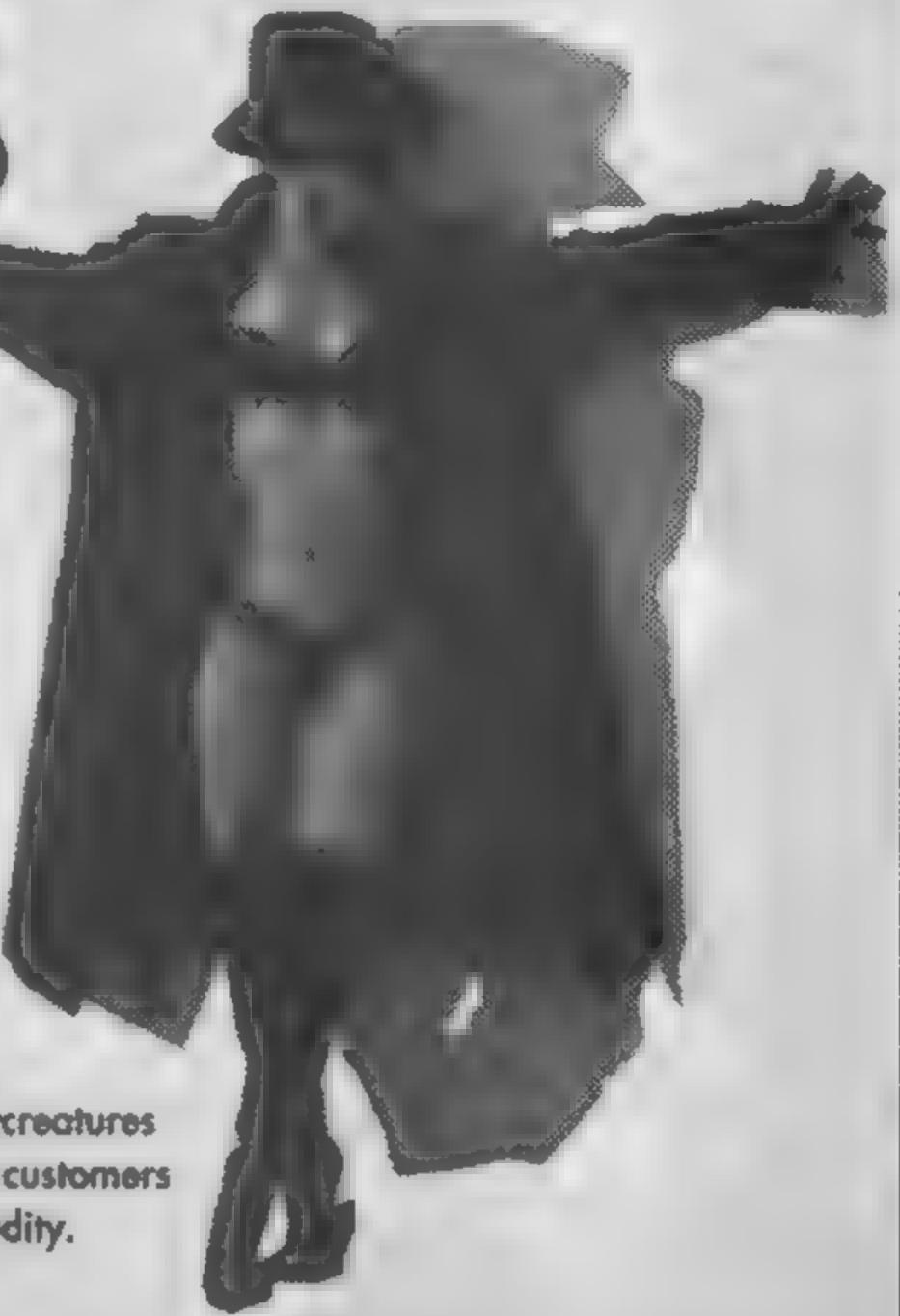
# CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

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and the cast's delivery of it. It became apparent that there was not a true thespian in the cast. The plot and dialogue needed work, too. Regardless of its faults, *Darkness* shows a fair amount of promise for Leil Jonker.

—SN

### SOME GUYS

95min/Video

Christopher Tenzis



### THE FLESHY ABSOLUTELY NASTY, GORY OFFICIAL MAKE-UP VIDEO

60min/Video

Christopher Tenzis



Of all Christopher Tenzis' films, *Some Guys* is the most structured. Unlike the others, it's entirely scripted, but the lack of spontaneity is forgivable and maybe even necessary for such a focused documentary. It's made up of interviews with eight fictional guys, ranging from a Motley Crue fanatic in deep need of some Lithium to a virgin with a suppressed sexual attraction for Mozart. Answering questions about things as common as first dates, platonic relationships, and young love, the interviewees somehow still come up with the strangest of answers. The first guy describes his disastrous first kiss: He was suffocated from some sort of sense deprivation and everything began to smell all wrong until he became so sickened he threw up in the girl's mouth and then she threw up on his shoulder and ran away. Even stranger is the arrogant misogynist who calmly explains, "Woman are trash...they're animals, they starve themselves for men that are cannibals when it comes to their own sex...they cannibalize one another with their

wardrobes. Woman don't dress for men, they dress for each other...and they shave their armpits, which is just a sin." Another man describes the women in his life as broken fruit, saying they bruise easily like a ripe banana when dropped. With so many conflicting viewpoints, *Some Guys* is a "battle of the sexes" as well as a battle between men over their views on women.

In a completely different vein, have you ever wondered how you might go about creating a blood-drenched tendon-exposing, festering gash on your neck? Well, the prolific Tenzis has gone and made *The Fleshy Absolutely Nasty, Gory Official Make-up Video* to satisfy your morbid curiosity. The beginning of the video is a perfect farce on cheap slasher/gore flicks: screeching girls in college sweatshirts racing madly through forests from psycho killers after noticing that their party guests have been stabbed to death with blunt objects. The psycho killer, in this case, is a chuckling, blade-happy, blood-slurping circus clown. There are clips from *Window of Blood II* and *III*, a remake of *Psycho*'s shower scene, and a continuous parody of self-indulgent filmmaking—shamelessly excessive camera work and overt references to the script. After the horror flick reaches its oh-so-climactic end, the "instructional" part of the video begins. The director eloquently talks us through the art of creating ripped throats, tied tendons, monstrous bruises and, most importantly, tasty blood. Aside from being so very informative, *The Make-up Video* perversely capitalizes on tragedy and physical agony and should be seen as morally reprehensible and dangerous to the human psyche. Yes, these

# REVIEW SPOTLIGHT

**VERONICA**  
90min/Video  
Christopher Tenzis  
10 1 1 1 1

### VERONICA

acronym for Video Experiments Rendered Over Night In Complete Absurdity, is a TV show with six 15 minute episodes and best described as a free form exercise in random madness—beyond experimental and sometimes downright nutty. The show's creator/writer/director Christopher Tenzis ironically calls it

"an experiment in self-conscious, guerrilla video-making." Just think of America's *Fanniest Home Videos* in an intense drug haze. The first show opens with a segment called "The Vegetarian" in which a guy flounces about on somebody's lawn, chomping on planes. From here, the movie becomes a mosaic of absurd non-sequiturs. Some of it is perhaps funny only to frustrated film nerds. (The director, himself, is like a film theorist run amuck, driven to insanity by an overactive brain). One hyper-real scene mocks mental-masturbating film junkies with its title, "voyeurism, commedia dell'arte, sex, time, light, contrivance, surrealism, structuralism, violence and conflict, space, synecdoche implying minimalism, montage, verisimilitude and the 4th wall in relation to Bob." *Veronica* is sprinkled throughout with this sort of crazy reflexivity. Memorable sequences include the segment "Desperate" which depicts a guy playing strip solitaire with a lot of emotion, "The Big Bang" in which classical music accompanies a guy (film lackey/fish wrangler) T. Christopher Lucas) repeatedly smashing his head into a wall until he drops dead; a very jovial add for Fantastic cleaning supplies; some character molesting his teddy bear; and, the most inspirational of them all—the table-munching experience: "When was the last time you enjoyed the taste of a really good desk? Might you be the type of person who loves the feel of a smooth, hard wood floor under your tongue? Do you feel a sort of brotherhood to termites? Well don't be shy. Stop munching that closet door you've been hiding behind and come out. Welcome to the wood-licking extravaganza." I can honestly say that after being a spectator to this magnificent sport, I am a changed person. If the impossibly zany, preposterous collage of psychopathic video-making that is *Veronica* could be summed up at all, then it would have to be with Tenzis' tag-line/warning—"Expect the Absurd."



VERONICA creator/  
writer/director  
Chris Tenzis and  
T. Christopher Lucas.

—Jessica Kaplan



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are, indeed, the reasons why I've seen it four times...and counting

—JK

## OZONE

83min/Super VHS  
Tempe Video

**9**

When does one stop classifying someone as an "amateur"? Somehow, that label just doesn't seem to apply to J.R. Bookwalter any longer. The director is best known for his exceptional Super 8 zombie epic, *The Dead Next Door*. His latest, a story of a polymorphic narcotic, helps him close in on the title "pro." *Ozone's* story revolves around a cop's (James Black) search for his missing partner and the eponymous shape-shifting drug he's lead to. The cop becomes an unwilling test subject, learns first-hand what

the nasty concoction can do, and uncovers its maker's plans to conquer the world. Black, a former Cleveland Brown, almost comes across as a professional actor. As I consistently knock the cheesy look of nearly all made-on-video features, I was taken aback to find that *Ozone* was shot entirely on Super VHS. It looks great—better than Filmlook. I admit, I was fooled—which probably was intended. The film's budget of just \$5,500 came more into perspective when I learned that the cast and crew was comprised mostly of friends

and family of the director. At times, Bookwalter and Black

were the only two running the show. The shooting took only three or four weeks, with an additional two weeks of pick-ups. There is also plenty of vis-cera for fans of such, with adept use of make-up and morph effects. The script could have used a bit of work (the madman-seeks-to-conquer-world scenario isn't all that fresh), but overall, *Ozone* was an enjoyable view. Mr. Bookwalter really knows what he's doing, and he seems to be getting better at it. With a budget equaling that of *Dead Next Door* (\$100,000), who knows what he could do now

SN

## AGE OF DEMONS

Too many min/VHS  
Now-A-Blank Video

**3**

I hate to trash someone's hard work, which is why I hold no reservations about calling Damon Foster's *Age of Demons* a piece of shit. In what Foster called "a last-ditch effort to make my name somewhat known" (in FTVG #9's Mail Bag), he has created an embarrassing mish-mash of badly shot, poorly-acted, racist, misogynist monotony. *Demons* starts off with a disclaimer of sorts which attempts to apologize for the



Despite impressive kung fu chops, *Demons* is limp monotony with a dash of tired exploitation.

movie ahead of time, but to no avail—no matter how skilled a writer you may be, AIDS and jokes involving the word "nigga" just aren't funny. The script remains weak throughout. We are subjected to the tired exploits of a group of friends as they try to thwart the efforts of a religious cult, led by a trio of women who resemble Motley Crue/drag queens, to over-run the world with hideously Don Post-like demons. The generous grade of 3 given here is due mostly to Foster's exceptional stunt work and fairly well choreographed fight sequences, of which there were more than just a few. Also, the action and the costumes reminded me of *The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, cheese for which I have a weakness. Besides, a grade any higher might encourage Mr. Foster to foist more of this upon us

SN



Impressive action, make-up and computer effects highlight Bookwalter's latest feature, *Ozone*.

For more information regarding these and other videos, see the classified section and other ads.

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Magazine reviews by Courtney E. Winsfree

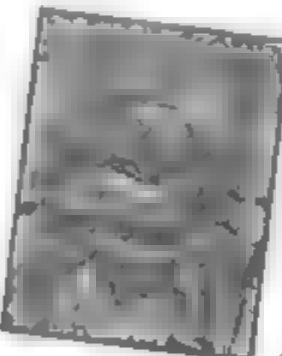


## INTERNATIONAL TATTOO ART

Butterfly Publications  
162 Broadway 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10013  
\$4.99

Not one to judge a book by its cover, I'd still run far and fast from the guy gracing February's issue of *ITA*. Mike Wilson's

inked from the crown of his bald (but nicely shaped) head, to the bridge of his nose, over his entire face, neck, and body. Now, if you'd date a man like this, or even let him in your home, than *International Tattoo Art* is for you. (Actually, he's probably the kind of guy who, after a tough day as a carnival freak, would wash the dishes after dinner.) *Tattoo Art* pays homage to the masterpieces adorning human bodies. Tattoo tidbits, tattoo junkies, and tattooed bands fill each issue. If you're sporting any ink yourself, or you just like to see what some folks do for amusement, pick up *ITA*.



## HARDCORN

P.O. Box 471807  
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Brainchild of filmmaker Sarah Jacobson (featured on page 67), *Hardcorn* is a conglomeration of creativity from a wide spectrum of artists. It's definitely readable, with an ample amount of humor lubrication to battle the dryness of self-indulgence—the kind that no matter how many times you read a piece, you have to have seen the genitalia of at least one member of the *Hardcorn* clique to get its meaning. But, some of the comic-style editorial is universal: "Fourth Grade," "The House Guest," and the graphic illustration of clitoral stimulation were my favorites. Really guys, it's worth the cover price just to bone up ('scuse the expression) on the real G-spot of the female anatomy.



## NEXUS SIX

P.O. Box 1394  
Hollywood, CA 90078  
\$2

*N6* is a techno (*Mondo 2000*) and entertainment (*Fizz*) hybrid geared toward pop culture consumers who can use words like "baud" and "NTSC signal" with confidence. The slim premiere issue offers news on interactive sex and virtual reality, suggestions for potential stalker victims, and graphic instructions on noose-tying. The review section includes scoop on music, videos, software, books, zines and other stuff I don't understand. The cover sure is colorful. It's probably safe to say you won't find this combination of information elsewhere.

## SPAZZ

P.O. Box 754  
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We have three issues of *Spazz* to review, in part because they use the same printer we do and we filched (not to be confused with fished) a couple back issues when we were last there. For the young hipster crowd:

comics, band interviews, philosophy, art and music reviews with an undertow of anti-racism in a readable B&W layout with short blurbs of information and big comic frames. After reading a review on censorship in the October issue, I was disappointed to read an apology on the following page lamenting *Spazz*'s mistake of allowing a particular ad to run. The editors disagreed with the philosophy of some associates of the advertiser and felt they should have censored this particular ad for a tattoo convention in Los Angeles. Weak Anti-censorship goes both ways. But otherwise, *Spazz* is worth checking out. After all, it is free.

## GIRLHERO

7502 15th Avenue NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
\$3

Two black and white comic strip stories comprise *Girlhero*—a title promising so much more than it delivers. "Bottlecap," the feature story, is an incoherent war tale about feminist welders taking over their factory and turning themselves into bionic, appliance-powered man-killers. The second story, "Frozen Angel," is less complex—a tragedy of unrequited love. The unloved cuts her heart out so she never has to feel pain again and in its place, a frozen angel dwells. Emotionally impenetrable, the woman cannot love, much to the dismay of her boy toy who eventually proves that, even in the comics, men suck. I really dug the second story, but, it's still not worth three bucks.



## ESSENTIAL CINEMA

2011 Fifth Avenue #301  
Seattle, WA 98121-2502  
\$3.75

Although *Essential Cinema* is another premiere issue, it doesn't read like an amateur effort. Originating from Seattle, it has a local focus but spans the globe to offer interviews from New York's Richard Kern and Germany's Johannes Schonheit. A comprehensible, non-patronizing essay entitled "Video Deconstruction" by Seattle mediemaker Antero Alli offers practical advice on making the oft-scolded art "videofilm." Another professional argues the merits of non-linear editing in a well-researched article complete with dollar figures, brands and techniques. A calendar of festivals and on-going events is listed in the back of the magazine, along with a number of organizations offering funding. *Essential Cinema* is a good read for both filmmakers and fans of independent film. [TV]

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# BABES IN ARM

by David E. Williams

Some regular readers will be surprised by the tack we've taken in this issue. Well, I hope a lot more will be SHOCKED. Nope, this isn't another sloppily dolled-up grue some gore—this isn't a horror magazine—but the nature here is subversive for sure.

Sadly, the majority of women profiled in independent (and mainstream) film mags are non-threatening, rarely provocative and usually overtly image-oriented. Face it, they're mostly scantily-clad actresses whose careers consist of playing lust objects or soon-to-be dead bodies. There's even an entire genre of publications covering these femme fatales in leering detail—essentially porn mags for the under-age set—and worshipping them as would-be starlets instead of bimbos in bikinis with bulls-eyes stenciled on their backs. Well, there are alternative roles women can play in filmmaking and in this issue we try to explore a few of them.

Like their more glossy opposites, Christine Martin, Beth B, Lydia Lunch, Michele Hundleman and others

# BONNIE AND

profiled here also use their perceptions of sexuality, power and femininity, but in startlingly different ways. Ones that not only make them unique, but will challenge your perceptions about what women are doing and what they are capable of when they create the opportunity.

Though the prospect of dedicating an entire issue to "women filmmakers" may seem to be a condescending notion—as every issue should be an opportunity to cover the topic—the following pages came together more out of the sheer will of the subjects than any editorial scheming on our part. With few outlets willing to expose their work due to either political differences or simple gender bias, many of these women simply wore us down with incessant phone calls and letters. We had to do it. And while there are plenty of people left out of this issue due to space, time and a multitude of other restraints, it's our plan to take greater pains in covering the films of the opposite sex. (At least opposite mine.)



# CATFIGHT!

Filmmaker Christine Martin lets loose her free-wheeling attitudes on sexuality in *Catfight: A Post Feminist Knockout*—one of the few films that combines boxing babes and a post-feminist agenda.

by David E. Williams

Veteran videomaker and occasional fetish film performer Christine Martin abandoned her past as video "artist" and feminist activist to make the sort-of-documentary *Catfight: Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Be A Feminist* with codirector Glenn Belverio. As a hair pulling, face-slapping, scratching and biting intergender battle, *Catfight* uses all its moves to viciously lampoon the establishment and is unafraid of being both sexy and meaningful. A frequently funny investigation into the much-maligned world of the fully-sexual female, the tape offers a spicy blend of interviews with the likes of sex researcher Annie Sprinkle intermixed with found-footage clips of exploitation film girl-on-girl tussles, anti-porn documentaries and suitably gynecological sex loops.

A self-described backlash against traditional, NOW-fostered feminism from within, the appropriately titled *Catfight* could be seen as a major volley in the battle for the heart and soul of the women's movement—one that has been alternately (and equally) fragmented by both

Christine Martin opens up.



Wrestling wenches (Jennifer Kabat and Christine Martin).

the "all sex is rape" hard line and Sprinkle-lead "sex goddess" response.

*Catfight* quickly capitalizes on the comedic, smash cutting images of beauty queen competitions with rough and tumble, B&W, female wrestling of the Irving Klaw variety—enacted by Ms Martin herself and Jennifer Kabat with plenty of sneering, choking and posing to emphasize the inherent beauty of bouting babes.

The success of *Catfight* (as well as some legal repercussions from one

interviewee who refused to sign a release) has prompted codirectors Martin and Belverio to refocus their take on feminist fisticuffs in their follow-up bout, *Catfight: A Post-Feminist Knockout*. Here, the passionate conflict of female boxing will provide the framework for their analysis of beauty, behavior and rigid gender roles.

Yeah, and it'll also be a great excuse to watch a couple of sweaty girls in a ring sock each other

about for three rounds to the cheers of horny men—and women—everywhere. Which makes this story of interest to the typically hard-up VIDEO GUIDE readership.

The following interview with Ms. Martin was done between cold showers—with her Canadian lilt slowly growing on me. More explicit passages have been edited in the interest of professionalism—and consideration to my girlfriend, who spent the 45 minute call on the wrong side of a locked door.



*What were some of the things that inspired you to make the original Catfight?*

Just discovering the notion of "catfight" feminism—which is what the follow-up *Catfight: A Post-Feminist Knockout* is going to be about—and discovering that that was going to be my new access point into feminism. I had been very, very disappointed by feminism and, having gone through all the manifestations and permutations of pro-sex feminism and then sex-worker feminism and all the things that were trying to get people away from all those big, bad censorship-feminists. But then I realized I wasn't getting further away from anything—that the enemy was within and I really had to purge it somehow. To find out what the real problem was, one of gender and representation. So that was going to take some real work.

I actually worked in a catfight film—I did some fetish films—and I thought, oh my goodness, this is something that feminists really, really hate—women fighting each other for men's pleasure. But why do they hate it and why do men like it? It's simply a fetish, so I tried to find out what was interesting

**"They're actually a lot more vicious than the women in the catfight movies because they fight until knockout. Until one of them is unconscious."**

—CHRISTINE MARTIN ON FEMALE BOXERS

about the fetish. It was a beautiful image of how women are both strong and weak in different ways and really a great poetic image of women struggling. Even today in mainstream media, these two ice skaters [Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan]—that's one of the best catfights we have going right now. They are amazing symbols of grace, beauty, youth, femininity and they want to *win*

*The "fetish" you seem to be describing is really analogous to women watching two men in a ring boxing. A lot of women get off on that*

Yeah, I love that

*That's considered socially acceptable, but if a promoter put two equally athletic, similarly scantily clad women in a ring, he would be*

Annie Sprinkle reminisces about her porno past and the preciousness of men's bodily fluids in *CATFIGHT*.

*shamelessly exploiting them.*

It's interesting that you would mention that because I'm using boxing footage in *Post-Feminist Knockout*. I've collected hours and hours of film and tape about female boxing—which is considered a level of the fetish, but is one step up from traditional catfight films. It's not as gritty, it's more athletic and considered more "sports-like." Female boxing has been going on in France, Germany, England, everywhere since the '60s, and I have this great footage of women in little Adidas shorts or little jumpers, sometimes topless, sometimes not, in these huge arenas full of men watching these young, pubescent-looking girls fighting. I guess the girls have that little bit of boyish charm to them. But they're actually a lot more vicious than the women in the catfight movies because they fight until knockout. Until one of them is unconscious. So it's really fascinating. I was watching a few on tape and all I could think of was "She's down...oh my God, she is *down!*" So it

really made me look at men's boxing in a different way. It's really dramatic—that human kind of drama people really want to see—and people think women generally have a different way of working out their problems other than fighting, so it's even more fascinating. They're not going to do it that way, they're going to do it in some kind of sisterly, democratic, logical, more matriarchal



Photos from *Catfight: Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Be A Feminist*

fashion. Let's sit down and talk about this. NO! They're going to get to the fisticuffs just as quickly as the men. People say there would be fewer wars if women ran the world—BULLSHIT! Definitely not! Do you know how many wars there have been waged by, for and between women?

*So how have so many gotten the wrong idea about this stuff?*

The Left has really led a lot of women astray in issues of gender and beauty and allure and women's attractiveness by saying "This is a bourgeois thing." Women have to be appreciated for their minds and their labor value and what they can actually do. But they discount the fact that half of what women can do is through beauty and I don't think we should deny the pursuit of beauty as a bourgeois thing. Some people will always be more interested in form and I think the women who spend a little extra time making sure that they look a little more attractive are just considering that.

*Gloria Steinham thinks working in a Playboy Club thirty years ago gives her some unique viewpoint on men. What did acting in fetish films teach you?*

I've made an investigation into the sexual subculture and tried to understand what it means to be a fetishist—which is simply being a connoisseur—but it gets to a point where it's almost annoying. I'm dealing with this one guy, who is actually really great, but who is helping me get these female boxing films. He knows so much about them, he has so much information, so much detail that I can really only talk to him for about an hour at a time. Who does what, where, for how long and what it's all about and all the names of everyone—it's admiring something in an overly detailed way. It's like, yeah, getting to know a shoe really well.

*Specifically, why are you making this second version of Catfight?*

They are going to be very different. The first version of the film is an X-rated,

**Christine and Jennifer Kabat are locked all hot and heavy in the Klaw-style segment in CATFIGHT.**

Photo: Tracy Topp





Christine is all dressed up and ready to make \$200 an hour dominating the weaker gender.

underground version and it's meant for a different audience. We also found that it would be difficult to distribute it because of the X-rated portions. It wasn't very much, maybe a minute, and we needed those shots—cum shots—because feminists were saying that kind of material, facial cum shots were degrading, so we had to show them in their beauty. We had to show the stuff we were talking about. We had to show "office porn" to describe the kind of "boss-secretary" stuff that goes on. We had to show politically incorrect sexual positions. But this time around, in *Post-Feminist Knockout*, there's going to be less pornography, prostitution, date rape or even sexual harassment. It's going to be more about gender, femininity—and masculinity—because as we approach the next century, exaggerated models of men and women are going to become more of a force in our culture. So the androgynous feminism we have today is going to be seen as even more boring and old than it is now.

*What was the reaction to the first Catfight?*

It was really interesting because it was one of the very first voices of dissent from within. People are starting to see it everywhere, there are entire shelves of books on the subject of post-feminism, but at the time, it was very confessional for people to have seen the film and actually come up to me and say they liked it. We were getting these individual confessions of "I loved your video" in whispers—but these same people wouldn't say it out loud in public.

*I guess it would be like confessing that you listen to Howard Stern every day.*

Yeah, so almost every time it was shown there would be

some kind of a problem. At the premiere in New York, after the screening, there was this little caucus of women outside saying "What are we going to do about this?" When it played in Toronto there was this curatorial disclaimer made as an attempt to distance themselves from the film. Ultimately the show's curator admitted that she was bothered by the scene where the beauty queen calls the feminist a fat, smelly cow. It was shown at the Gay and Lesbian Festival in Montreal—and to cause any kind of ruffle in Montreal is unusual—but people were actually walking out and throwing things at the screen. I couldn't tell what they were throwing—thinking it was tomatoes, rotten fruit and stuff—but it was actually just snotty kleenex. It's so cold up there that everyone is permanently sick.

*What are the specific images that make people walk out? There must be a few. People will put up with some shit, but something has to push them over the line.*

Well, the video is set up to give them a spoonful of sugar—a joke, whatever—for every time something heavy comes on. So there is relief, but some people just don't get it. One stodgy old feminist told me it felt like she was being doused through the entire film. It was so funny. But people get mad at different things. One is the female masochist, the rape scene—which was actually taken from an educational therapy film—so there are those but people have problems with different things. But I saw people involuntarily laughing—these female writers yakking their heads off, smiling enjoying it—but afterwards saying "Oh, no, I didn't enjoy that." Oh fuck off, I saw you laughing—so the only people who get it, or who enjoy the film, are people who aren't at odds with or embarrassed about their sexuality. Like *Screw* magazine has done reviews of it—they seemed to enjoy and understand it.

*Do most people who have problems with the film have them because such serious stuff is made fun of and surrounded by humor? Or is your point of view just too different? They say that feminists don't have a*

sense of humor—well, they REALLY don't. I'm in this off-Broadway play right now called "Die Stripper, Die," and I play this really great, tough broad from Chicago. Anyways, I get killed at the end of the play, right after I shoot up with heroin and do my strip. So I was supposed to get killed wearing pasties, a G-string and a big feather headdress—but there was this big protest that I couldn't get killed wearing pasties. It would be

The men check out the brawling bitches in a '70s exploitation clip in *Catfight*.



Photo from *Catfight: Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Be A Feminist*

way too misogynist, much more than if I got killed wearing a bra—there was this misogyny meter telling them it was wrong

Where did you find some of the material you used in *Catfight*?

Well, it was really important to Glenn [Belverio] and I that we just get it out there, so we pirated some stuff from television, films, what we could find in research films at the library—about old feminist demonstrations and bra burnings and stuff—and we also stole stuff from companies who make sexual harassment films for big corporations. We did all that. But on this next one, the boxing film, we're hoping to make it a bit less rough around the edges. A little more honest. I have no idea how much it cost but it took about six months to make the first film

Were there any ideas of images that you put aside because they were too offensive?

Well, there were. We wanted to do this big rape section—even bigger than it is—and a pedophilia section, because we sorta think pedophilia is the last sexual frontier, but it's really difficult to do anything on the subject.

That's going to be my pet project for the '90s, doing a film about pedophilia. Part of my research has been buying *Vogue Bambini*, a

Italian high fashion magazine about children and fashion—and it come shrink-wrapped, just like porn. So inside there are kids in fur coats and vinyl—really eroticized images of children. Any film like that would have to be

done very carefully because you could get in a lot of trouble over it. A friend of mine in Toronto, a painter, could possibly be charged with child pornography and be sentenced to five years for some work he's done. And Janet Reno..

Aren't there some more dangerous criminals out there she could be going after, instead of worrying about the bullshit on television? Polly Klaas might think so.

This is all all about the feminist analysis of representation—as if words are the same as actions. No, words and pictures are not the same, but that's the whole point—old feminists still think representation is reality. They have a fucking brain tumor about that. It's like, "Synapse closed off? You cannot pass anything through here any more." Fucking brain-lock

How will the new *Catfight* be different in

Photo: Richard Kern



**"There was this big protest that I couldn't get killed wearing pasties. It would be way too misogynist, much more than if I got killed wearing a bra..."**



Christine bares her soul on the streets of NYC as Women Against Pornography obviously rant behind her.

tone from the first one? First off, it will be PG-13 rated—'cause we like thirteen-year-olds. We want those kids to come see it! There will be a little, acceptable toplessness—like a National Geographic film—but very educational about gender. The change has to do with reaching a broader audience, which has to do with being "correct." Nobody

wants to be politically correct and yet we're all trying to find out "Who is the politically correct?" So we're all trying to say "It's them" and not us. We don't want to take the blame for it. For those of us who were born and bred in the Left-wing world of academia, we're trying to save face by weed-ing out the PC element—so it's like some kind of witch-hunt to find out

Glennda (Glenn Belverio) interviews co-eds who are lucky enough to fall back on white privilege.

who are the good guys and who are the bad guys. Who's on the team?

*Kinda like Invasion of The Body Snatchers.*

Yeah! But by making the film more acceptable to *them*, we win. All my life I've had people challenging me with that [redacted]

## REVIEW

### CATFIGHT: JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO BE A FEMINIST

43 min/Film & Video

Martin/Belverio



While many who investigate the sexual frontiers seem to have a stick up their ass, codirectors Christine Martin and Glenn Belverio provide a refreshingly funny look at the friction points between women and men. Sure, date rape, on-the-job harassment and sexual discrimination are loaded topics, but *Catfight* manages to actually make them meaningful in a way

that transcends the norm of melodramatic episodes of *LA Law* or TV movies of the week by turning the subject on its head, co-opting the terms, acts and notions of sexual abuse and empowering its victims in Riot Grrrl (or however that's spelled) fashion. And it's funny too. Much of the humor, derived from stolen footage of

suffered at the hands of angry man-haters (Who happened to be men!), or accounts from highly-paid sex-workers who loath the activities of their militant sisters fighting to "free" them from

their chosen lifestyle, is guaranteed to piss off your PC friends—which makes *Catfight* a must-have if only for its room-clearing powers. Coupled with this empowering "not a victim" stance are some hilarious bits, including codirector/drag queen

Belverio (also seen in *Glennda* and *Camille Do Don'touuu* reviewed in last issue) inter-



One suburban college girl who won't have to sell her body. (Yeah!)

beauty pageants cut together with porn loops, tales from Richard Kern about how he's



Richard Kern laughs off his ill-informed feminist attackers.

viewing white, repressed, upper-middle-class college girls about the evils of the sex trade ("I went to five years of college... so I wouldn't have to do something like selling my body. I have an education."), Annie Sprinkle fondly reminiscing about her facial-shot past and, finally, Martin herself exposing more than a little cleavage whilst anti-porn demonstrators march in the background

David E. Williams



# GATE

**Christine Martin and Jennifer  
Kabat rough it up**

Photo: Tracey Tippet





"Kern seemingly aspires to be the downtown David Cronenberg."

—J. HOBERMAN, THE VILLAGE VOICE

"Kern gets some of the most horrific images since David Lynch's *Eraserhead*."

—THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

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# SOUTHERN GOTHIC



*Filmmaker Jeri Cain Rossi probably grew up swinging in a tire hanging from the tree in her front yard. Today her tire's a NYC birdhouse and her front yard is cement, but she's still a swinger.*

by Courtney E. Winfree

JERI CAIN ROSSI

Particle board housing and orphaned appliances overrun those cardboard colored towns where crop fields stretch a million miles in every direction and locals treat emigrants like traitors. It's a place you either never leave, or run away from as fast as you can.

The day the cord was cut, Jeri Cain Rossi began packing her bags. With an eye on New York City, she escaped her "medieval dogpatch" of a neighborhood with its promise of a future waiting tables and a redneck wedding.

"I didn't belong there," Rossi says, comfortably camouflaged in the city of anonymity. "I don't belong anywhere. I'm

an ET in any kind of society." After a pause she adds, "I am ET."

Well, Spielberg she's not. Never will her 15-minute *Black Hearts Bleed Red* be described as feel-good family entertainment. No, feel-sick more aptly describes *Black Hearts* featuring the notorious Joe Coleman as a sort of traveling sociopath. Fresh from a crime spree, Coleman and his compadres come upon a small-burg family brooding over their broken down car.

Appropriating a story by southern belle-gone-gothic Flannery O'Conner, Rossi's limited action short paints the history and future of eight people in less time than it

takes to channel surf through your cable stations. Defined by just one exaggerated dimension of each character's personality, the cast consists of a shrewish wife and her browbeaten husband, three nihilists with a lust for killing, two invisible children, and a grandmother figure from the Tennessee Williams school of *Stella*. The confrontation between the strangers is fulfilling and believable, ultimately ending with several brutal executions.

*Black Hearts* is an androgynous film, uncommitted to a gender perspective—like the filmmaker herself. Raised by an ambitious mother who resented her own lack of opportunity, Rossi was not

'encouraged to aspire. "My dad valued my opinions, but the female side of my parenting was crippling. One of my mom's gifts to me was saying 'I didn't get to do what I wanted, so why should you?'" says the anthropology major who didn't have the confidence as an undergrad to pursue filmmaking. Later on, with a reserve of courage built up, Rossi earned a master's degree in film from Massachusetts' College of Art. She doesn't resent her brother for the favoritism bestowed on him by their parents, but Rossi would have been more valued had she been born with testicles.

Even so, her genitalia invades her art less than her childhood religion. Commenting about her first film hero, Martin Scorsese, Rossi says, "He's so Catholic." In a voice thick with a sinister twang, Rossi credits the neo-pagan rituals of Catholicism for her attraction to the unusual and, consequently, the psychodrama of Flannery O'Connor. Earnestly, she talks about an Easter trip to Spain where she looks forward to witnessing "ritualists drumming until their hands bleed as they suck incense until they can't breathe." She is practically clapping with delight.

Agony as ecstasy was responsible for Rossi hooking up with Joe Coleman whom she regards as a brother. When Coleman performed at a Boston show Rossi promoted, the municipality's bomb squad, arson investigators and related folks got their panties in a knot when Coleman wore firecrackers on his chest. Coleman, his wife and Rossi bonded as they were arrested in Boston, but Rossi parted from her associates when it came to parting with cash. Husband and wife paid fines. Rossi got off. Everybody eventually went to New York where they continue to collaborate on projects. "He deserves all the accolades he gets. I've learned a lot about life from Joe," says the filmmaker of the performer

Rossi has surrounded herself with similarly supportive friends, vehemently denying the antagonism some female filmmakers experience from their contemporaries. "Friends are going to support you, competitors won't. I can't say it's a male/female thing. I can say no



**Joe Coleman gets hot in Rossi's *Black Hearts Bleed Red*.**

female artists have discriminated against me.

Commercially successful women she admires don't readily come to mind. But she cites Clint Eastwood and Russ Meyer as feminist filmmakers worthy of praise. Eastwood? Meyer?

"They play with male and female roles. Russ fashions his characters after 'Lil Abner—buxom and bossy. He got away with nudity because he portrayed women as stronger and in control, and men as worms crawling after the ladies.' She calls Eastwood the "original white clown" who now makes fun of the masculine caricatures he made famous. "In *Unforgiven*, he falls off a horse. And in *Heartbreak Ridge*, a tough marine reads *Cosmopolitan*," Rossi says in giddily

**"One of my mom's gifts to me was saying 'I didn't get to do what I wanted, so why should you?'"**  
**—Jeri Cain Rossi**

approval

Besides Eastwood, Rossi leans toward Jim Jarmusch and Gus Van Sant as god-like directors she'd like to buddy up with. But in keeping company with her religion, her mother, and her hometown, Rossi's idols don't escape criticism. "*Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*—it's not very good: too hip, not holding up well," she says resignedly, relegating her admiration to Van Sant's past successes. Whether she gets to work with one of her icons or not, Rossi definitely sees features in her future. "When I'm not doing something creative, I'm not alive. Life was given to create. I need to work really hard, produce a lot of stuff, write, and get focused and

organized." With a philosophy like that, there's no question that she'll be behind a camera even if she doesn't meet with financial reward.

Like every up-and-coming filmmaker not independently wealthy, Rossi juggles a couple of jobs to meet rent and get movie money. Working as a P.A. on commercials, she gets access to talented, creative people and company-donated lights—valuable benefits as she works on the "Civil War epic thing" currently on hiatus thanks to the effect alcohol has on some of the folks involved with the project. But eventually, the Civil War piece will be on the scale of a Cecil B. DeMille pic—at least in Rossi's mind.

For now, she's living out the real drama of roommate nightmare. Evicted by the New York City Marshall because the tenant of the apartment she'd just moved into failed to mention the \$7,000 owed in back rent, Rossi's current directorial efforts consist of bringing her confiscated belongings back into her world. Consider it research, Jeri.

Now, she's prepared to film the saga of a small-town girl infected by the big city. To make it *a la* Rossi, the heroine needs to be a boozy nympho who, after executing the evil roommate as she reads a paper at breakfast, sidles into the booth and eats the dead woman's sticky bun. Didn't Flannery O'Connor already write that story?

*Rossi can be reached at 44 Lispenard St #1, New York, NY 10013.*

# BAD GIRLS

by Courtney E. Winfree

*Debunking the "angry woman" myth and reassuring the public that women aren't looking to brainwash Hollywood with feminist dogma, female directors explain that they just want to play with the big boys.*

**W**omen make great directors." Apparently, Hollywood moneymen don't rally behind director Lizzie Borden's sentiment, if the slim number of studio-financed movies made by women is any indication. Opinions vary as to whether the situation for women behind the camera is improving. And for that matter, whether the number of three-dimensional female roles is increasing or suffering from the backlash that some women feel has infiltrated all aspects of American society in the last decade.

That Hollywood lacks respect for women can be inferred from the way they are portrayed on screen. Dr. Susan Barber, assistant professor in communication arts at Loyola Marymount University, notes that the Seventies were a more prosperous time for well-rounded strong female leads,

citing *Klute*, *Julia*, *Norma Rae* and *Girlfriends* as examples. Each of these films featured at least one independent woman whose character wasn't based solely on her sexuality.

"I'm nervous about the portrayal of women in film today," says Dr. Barber, "I think it looks pretty bleak." She believes money-controlling men, "threatened very easily" by strong women, initiated a backlash against the progressive feminist movement of the Seventies. Ironically, not one of the directors FILM THREAT spoke to aligns herself with any particular ideology, preferring to work with a "female" eye as opposed to a "feminist" one. Surely, there are self-proclaimed feminists making films, but there doesn't appear to be a strong Riot Grrrl mentality plotting to wash over Hollywood any time soon. There is agreement, however, that getting films financed is no easy task for women.

Whereas guy films (*Terminator*, *Robocop*, *Die Hard*) are cranked out regularly, "chick flicks" like *Fried Green Tomatoes* and *Sleepless in Seattle* are almost grudgingly produced, with key players patting themselves on the back for pulling off an unusual feat and taking a risk balked at by other studios. Dr. Barber blames the lack of female-directed films in Hollywood on the "old boy's network" not wanting to risk their dollars with an untried property (read: young, female



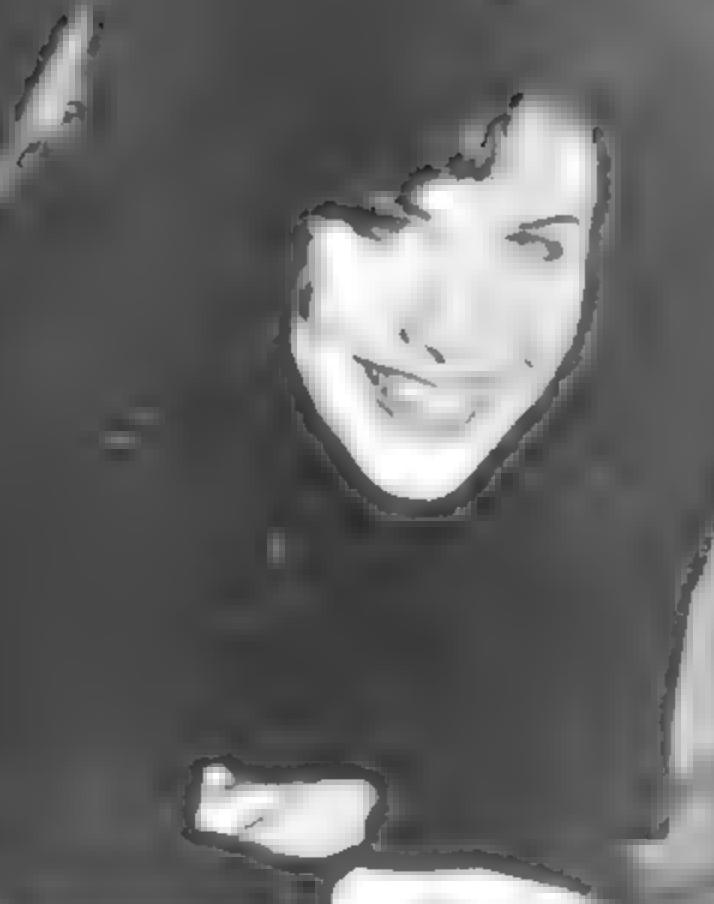
Lisa Barnstone likes to play with clay and assorted bits of debris.

director). Reasonable enough, but she also believes that the financiers are more critical of women, using unequal standards to judge a film's success.

Tamra Davis, director of *Gun Crazy* and *CB4*, thinks she may have been an example of women being judged more harshly when she was replaced by Jonathan Kaplan as the director for *Bad Girls*, the upcoming all-girl western starring Drew Barrymore. "Maybe it was a male thing. They wanted to do a female *Young Guns*, but I had a different vision," says Davis who wanted to draw on historical rather than mythological old-west characters. One post-production *Bad Girls* insider said the story circulating on the set was that Davis was yanked because the powers-that-be were unhappy with her dailies. Even if that were the case, the questions remain, would she have been so quickly replaced had she been a man? Was Tamra Davis accorded the respect and support a male counterpart would have gotten? Will she be blamed anyway if the film flops?

The lack of respect for women as filmmakers and as central, relevant characters on screen is only magnified at the top; it doesn't start there. Even the lowliest film school student fights discrimination. Up-and-comer Sarah

Lizzie Borden likes talking about sex. Below: a shot from her latest feature, *Backlash*, an anthology by four women.



Jacobson, recently garnering much attention for *I Was a Teenage Serial Killer*, reveals that as a student at the San Francisco Art Institute she wasn't taken as seriously as her male peers. In an article elsewhere in this issue, Jacobson recounts how a female professor asked her who shot her film, disbelieving that she coulda done it all by her little self. Bull hickey. Having a penis just isn't a pre-requisite for filmmaking. It may, however, be a necessary part of getting funds to make a movie.

"Women have a hard time getting dramatic movies made because budgets are tight and studios don't want to take risks," says Borden, a director whose work is often sexuality-centered but not necessarily geared toward women. Her 1991 film *Love Crimes* explored sexual chemistry without centering on either gender.

Most women directors aren't out to make exclusively femme films or to use their art as propaganda. Casey Niccoli, director of several music videos and the feature *Gift*, says she doesn't try to inject her sex into her work. "But, I'd be proud if you could tell a woman did it as long as it established me as a really cool artist who did good films."

Echoing Niccoli's sentiment, Borden agrees that her sex as a filmmaker isn't as important as the quality of her work. She is, however, very concerned with sex as subject matter. "I am committed to reinventing eroticism," says the director.

an ardent supporter of pornography and avid dissenter of hardcore feminist anti-sexuality rhetoric. As part of Allison Anders' (*Gas Food Lodging* and *Mi Vida Loca*) Independent Feature Project program mentoring to young Black and Latina filmmakers, Borden is also committed to being a role model, something neither she nor Davis had when they started out.

"Women weren't doing this a few years ago," says Davis, also an IFP mentor, about the industry in her neophyte years. "I totally respected Penelope Spheeris but I didn't want to be just like her. I wanted to be like Kubrick, Orson Welles and Scorsese." In agreement, Borden doesn't see her sisters who have gone on to achieve commercial success as role models or as mavericks making movies with a new

twist. "Barbra Streisand, Penny Marshall—great! But, if you fall into conventional storytelling, you're not really opening up the way other people see the world," she explains.

Case in point: Lisa Barnstone. Telling her stories with characters crafted from debris, Barnstone shoots animated actors in hand-made sets, enacting the original socio-political dramas she writes. Sexual commentary finds a place in her animation, but it's her methods which drive home any point she tries to make.

As a sculptor, Barnstone built pieces from found objects. As her interest in animation waxed, she began exploring untapped resources for materials. Budgets for her characters and sets are minimal, but not because she's cheap. "It makes me sick how much garbage is produced in film, and commercial and art industries. I just take garbage from the streets and from the commercial industries I work in. I wish all these art things like theatre, dance, commercial arts and films would learn to reuse materials. Hopefully, one day, people will recognize that as my message," says the very unconventional Barnstone.

To be fair, perhaps successful female directors would be more inclined towards less traditional methods of storytelling if American production companies would offer them the opportunity. Dr. Barber believes foreign companies are more supportive of their women filmmakers.

**"I am committed to reinventing eroticism."**  
—Lizzie Borden  
on pornography



Casey at the bat—directing a music video. Niccoli's collaboration with Perry Farrell resulted in *GIFT*.

citing Jane Campion's *The Piano* as a project that an American company wouldn't have had the "guts" to make, in part, because of its strong female sexuality. But all news isn't bad. Dr. Barber commends Fineline for releasing Maggie Greenwald's *The Ballad of Little Jo*, saying, "I am reassured to know that female directors are getting some money. An analogy could be drawn between *Little Jo*'s heroine dressing up like a man in order to get by in the old west to women in film having to fall into line and not upset tradition in order to get movies made. As an iconoclast over a decade ago, Penelope Spheeris forged her career with *The Decline of Western Civilization* and *Suburbia*. Now, as a respected director, the major risk Spheeris takes is in bringing defunct TV shows to the big screen. But, there is power in numbers and as Davis, Borden, Niccoli, Barnstone and a host of other female directors inflict womanhood on the film community, they will be able to command more, compromise less, and insist that women be treated as more than just bitches, whores and victims.

## LIZZIE BORDEN

Wielding a camera like she would a hatchet, this self-taught director reveals her passion for things sexual as she speaks out about the need for women to control their own lives.

Sex is on her mind. Prostitution. Phone sex. Eroticism. Pornography.

Lizzie Borden doesn't want to be thought of as a feminist filmmaker. She abhors the philosophy of Woman Against

Pornography, wearing her sexuality as a badge of honor instead of as a cross to bear. Unlike some women who lament their pick in the gender lottery, Lizzie relishes her female-ness, drawing from it in her art, using it as a tool rather than a weapon.

The three features she's completed all have a distinctively feminist propensity to them, but not in the traditional woman-as-exploited-victim vein. She describes her first film, *Born in Flames*, as a feminist manifesto; but it is *Working Girls*, her second film, which represents her particular brand of feminism.

*Working Girls* is about sex as an industry. Illustrating how call-girls and related workers have more power than WAP wants to admit, *Working Girls* reduces sex professions to their money-making basics. While stripping away any perceived glamour, it also reveals how prostitutes earn more and maintain more control over their lives than their table-waiting and secretarial sisters. What's the difference, Lizzie asks, between bartering sex for film roles, selling sex in marriage, and renting sex in an act of prostitution?

"Nothing," she answers emphatically. "This whole culture has to redefine its terms."

Admittedly, she's a voyeur, timid in her own life but eager to transfer her fantasies to the screen. With the only lines she draws being at child pornography and snuff films, Lizzie even condones masochism, "if the woman is in touch with her own sensibilities."

While she doesn't want to be pigeonholed into an erotic-thriller niche, Lizzie admits she was able to get *Love*

*Crimes*—the 1991 feature starring Sean Young—financed because it was a genre film. In a similar bent, she has also produced pieces for the Playboy channel and contributed a film to *Erotique*—an assemblage of sex-in-the-nineties shorts by four women living in different countries. Lizzie doesn't see herself as a dictatorial director but she did make the actors in her short *Let's Talk About Sex* come to her house and get into her underwear. "I wanted to help them strip down their fears, make them know they weren't going to look stupid." She also insisted her actresses in *Working Girls* apply for jobs in brothels. Lizzie, herself, worked sex phone lines for research. Would she ever go so far as prostitution? "Morally, I have no problem with it, if only I had the kind of body that could sell." The project she's writing now deals with abortion, McCarthyism, movies and feminism. You'll just have to wait until it's done to know how she ties such disparate concepts together.

## CASEY NICCOLI

Thrown into the deep end without the net of a famous spouse, Casey Niccoli's not only floating, she's swimming.

Like all women trying to make movies, Casey Niccoli fights to be noticed, to be recognized as a talented filmmaker with her own unique vision. But her Goliath is the reputation she earned while sidekicking with one of rock's reigning pharaohs—Perry Farrell, former frontman of Jane's Addiction, ideaman behind



Photo: Spike Jones

"I totally respected Penelope Spheeris but I didn't want to be just like her. I wanted to be like Kubrick, Orson Welles and Scorsese."

—Tamra Davis  
speaking about her role models

Tamra Davis likes to influence 15-year-old boys.

Lollapalooza, and currently a Porno for Pyros

Speaking easily, without hesitation, Casey exudes an unexpected innocence, like she got caught up in the world of rock and roll without knowing how she got there. The discolored patches of skin dotting her forearms give her an eerie credibility...been there, done that

Of course, her work is her strongest reference. An untrained fine artist, Casey worked on the "Nothing Shocking" and "Ritual de Habitus" album and CD covers with Perry. More importantly, she was the sole director of the "Been Caught Stealing" video by Jane's Addiction. When she rushed up to accept for best alternative video at the 1991 MTV awards, gushing in adoration of Perry, nobody mentioned that she was the director. "I earned that," she said of the award, admitting that her performance did nothing to advance her directorial career. "I have some wreckage that was seen by millions, but people are rallying behind me now."

In 1993 the three-year-in-the-making 16mm feature *Gift*—a joint project between she and Perry—was released with mixed reviews. It's not going to make her any richer—in fact, the title was chosen as a tongue-in-cheek stab at how the music industry screws its artists—but it, along with the 28-minute video/super 8 *Soul Kiss*, has helped to dispel her reputation as a Perry Farrell appendage. "Through Jane's Addiction, I got to do projects others don't get the opportunity to do," she admits, "but I'm constantly proving myself."

Now that she has revealed, in pseudo-

documentary style, her drug-addict lifestyle, she's up against another aspect of discrimination. "People aren't hiring junkies to direct commercials," she laughs resignedly, "but *Gift* was shot three years ago. It doesn't represent me now."

Casey wants to go beyond her past, wanting only her work—not her boyfriend or ancient history—to represent who she is now. She distances herself from any alliance, including the feminist and anti-feminist movements. "I support whatever someone truly believes in," she says about Riot Grrrls and their associates. But her sex isn't the basis of her work. "I come up with ideas that just get me off. I have a hard time expressing myself in words," she gropes to complete her thought, "so I do it with film...dark comedy."

She continues to make music videos, but Casey is looking for her next feature

## TAMRA DAVIS

*Like her music influences, Tamra's proletariat sympathies come out in her movies.*

Tamra Davis is another rock and roll wife (married to one of the Beastie Boys); but, unlike Casey Niccoli, there is no relationship between her husband and her career. Music videos have been a part of her history, but Davis is best known for *Gun Crazy* with Drew Barrymore and *CB4*, the rap movie starring Chris Rock

Late last year, she completed a documentary on women in music for the Red Hot Organization, interviewing high profile rockers like Kim Gordon, Courtney Love (Kurt who?), members of the

Boredoms and Bikini Kill. Leaning toward projects with strong females, one of Tamra's goals is to show that women aren't just radical feminists. "They can have fun, too," says the director who doesn't want to just make movies for women, by women, with women. "It's better to do various projects and let some of yourself seep in."

Davis avoids being categorized as a feminist director, ignoring the *Sleepless in Seattle* market, instead looking to reach a more varied audience with her art. "If I can influence 15-year-old girls, that's my first choice. But influencing 15-year-old boys is also helpful."

Unlike Borden and Niccoli, Davis did attend film school but not one of the mammoth universities so many would-be directors aspire to. "At regular universities, people wanted to be Spielbergs. The intellectuals that went there with their rich parents...I didn't want to show them my movies." So Davis went to Los Angeles City College, a two year community school bordering a barrio. She felt "regular people" went to LACC, and they would be a better indication of what a real audience would be like.

While she's been working on the Beavis and Butt-head music video, Tamra has been making plans for her next feature. One thing for sure, she won't be following in the footsteps of women in her grandmother's generation. "My grandma was under contract to a studio, but stopped when she got married. All women stopped in the old days."

These days, there's no stopping them. ■

# Lydia Lunch ICON & ASSAULT

*by Courtney E. Winfree*

For 17 years, audio/visual/literary confrontationalist Lydia Lunch has expunged her demons in various incarnations, often in collaboration with icons of the underground autre culture: photographer/filmmaker Richard Kern, directors Scott and Beth B, musicians Foetus, Rowland Howard, Nick Cave and Henry Rollins, and everything-girl Exene Cervenka, among them. Her controversial movies, writings, recordings and live performances have captivated a diverse audience, validating Lydia as an artistic force and a malignant tumor on America's psyche.





Photo: R. Kern

"I just don't see what the point is at this point. To me, the whole country's going through massive 1970 revivalism. I decided, by your standards, to lay low. I've already lived through the seventies once, and have no desire to re-enact my childhood."

*Seconds*, 1993.

In 1992, Lydia unleashed her rage in *Incriminating Evidence* (Last Gasp)—a package of rambling accounts of what can only be every atrocity she has endured in her lifetime. She ends her opening monologue beseeching the reader to READ IT & WEEP. Weep we will, not from the lugubrious tales Lydia recounts like diary entries, but from her rabid, acid-tongue

But these 184 pages of disjointed exposition, randomly capitalized as if she were shouting and illustrated by chomped penises and depictions of abused women, come alive like she was standing next to you, spewing bitter saliva in your face and clawing at you with manicured fingernails. Heavy with desperation, her words plead for attention.

The impact of Lydia's written work doesn't begin to compare with her spoken word *Cries Against Nature* (3-CD box set, Triple X Records) is a million minutes of passion and determination delivered by the verbal dominatrix who assesses a fee of



Photo: R. Kern

lashings directed at the middle-class patriarchal society, so often the target of everyone's wrath today. *Incriminating Evidence* isn't shocking in its material—as personal exposés are commonplace daytime talk fodder, and once taboo topics like mental illness, child abuse, and sexism are unabashedly discussed at dinner tables

comfortability. This is not family fare. This is not pretty. This is not rhymes whipped off to amuse.

As she says in RE/Search's *Angry Women*, Lydia's job is to rally the troops. "Everyone should assume a position in the ranks of this army, because it is war. I'd like to see a women's army storm into the White House with Uzis and shotguns and eliminate at least half the population who work in politics. They're killing you slowly. Kill them quickly, kill them now—before they kill everything else, okay?"



In the liner notes accompanying *Crime Against Nature*, Lydia lays down the history she attacks on her CDs

*For over two thousand years... until... madmen, mantises & would-be messiahs have been pillaging, plundering & raping the entire planet & getting away with it. The sick part is that this country was founded on conquest, bloodshed, rape, command & control. The real pornography. A world-wide plague of patriarchy is running & ruins 98% of the countries on this planet, instituting an outright full frontal attack on your civil, human, economic & intellectual rights.*

[When asked about people pilfering her screenplay ideas.]

"People have warned me, 'Well, what if someone else comes and makes the Dr. Jekyll/Sister Hyde type film?' Well, I think there should be ten or twenty films about premenstrual tension. Same way there were about five or six baseball films two years ago. Same way there are all these homeboy films. They run in spades. I'd love to inspire ten films about mass-murdering-hyper-hormonal women."

**Anti-Matter Magazine, 1992.**



While her statistics are questionable, her outrage is not. At times frail and pathetic, worn down by her tormentors, Lydia comes off as a tiny David fighting the Goliath that is the world as she perceives it: unjust, unequal, unmerciful. Her detractors lament the unchecked self-pity and inference that no one has suffered quite as much as she, but Lydia is unswayed in her mission. By exposing her own embattled childhood—stolen by a father who molested her, and her philosophy of taking control of one's life (Susan Powter's predecessor), Lydia wants women to force themselves to act on their behalf, to question the paucity of research on women's health issues, to embrace sexuality.

Although Lydia seems more militant than the women filmmakers interviewed in this issue, she is not a man hater, carefully including them in her plans to redesign society. "I wouldn't shoot 'em for the world!" she says of some guys she knows. But any boy who's ever crossed her had better run. **ED**



"I can't imagine wanting to do a piece of pornography without a gunfuck scene in it! That's not outrageous. Men will use anything to amuse themselves and often that means abusing the next victim with whatever tool: screwdriver, gun, knife, finger, fist, mouth." **On Our Backs, 1990.**



Photo: Ed Coker

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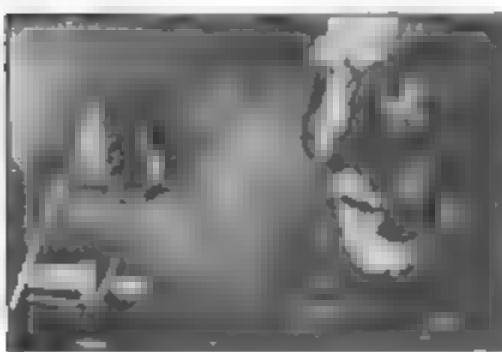
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# MICHELLE HANDLES HERSELF



*Art mags have compared watching Michelle Handelman's films to walking on hot coals. Sure she's tangy, but she's not bitter.*

*by Courtney E. Winfree*



**T**itles like *A History of Pain, Perverse Nature and Women on the Edge* conjure up the image of a caffeine-stoned dominatrix with a healthy curiosity. Hello, Michelle Handelman.

While her coffee intake and preference for domination over submission remains a mystery, her curiosity is without doubt. Sexuality especially intrigues this woman with an affinity for filming throbbing body parts and leather-loving dykes. Film labs and state-funded venues have censored her award-winning videos that attack cultural consciousness with clitoral close-ups and pierced weenies, but as a frequent exhibitor at festivals worldwide, Handelman shocks, embarrasses and nauseates audiences as she spreads her disease of dissension. A writer, photographer and artist educated in anthropology as well as film, Handelman is a card-carrying renaissance feminist.

There appears to be an unspoken (and likely unconscious) movement dictating that sensible femme filmmakers need no longer avoid naked female bodies. Handelman could be the poster-girl of this new manifesto.

"It's good to flaunt sex," she says matter-of-factly. Like her films, Handelman is straightforward about sexuality and her delight in it. "It's definitely a big motivation in my life and I just want to go on record saying I think lust is a very positive thing."

Blessed with physical characteristics that translate well on film, Handelman is often the star of her vignettes, using her own body to "celebrate, not exploit" womanhood. Her attempt to wake the complacent with nightmarish images and pubic-hair-close photography has been construed as homoerotic pornography by grantors withholding funds due to her work's extreme tone.

But, on the video compilation *Perverse Nature*, Handelman's subject matter is far less disconcerting than her presentation. She explores run-of-the-mill topics like



Handelman and frequent collaborator Monte Cazazza play cruel tricks on children.



**"I just want to go on record saying I think lust is a very positive thing."**

—Michelle Handelman

venereal disease, violence, drug testing and censorship by pummeling the viewer with aural psychosis and bizarre imagery. Conveying sexual pseudo-anxieties, she injects subliminal messages like "fuck off" into superimposed effects created within the camera by rewinding the film and shooting over exposed images.

While not depending on unclothed torsos,

Handelman never eschews nudity. "The use of the female body in my films is not always a celebration of the sexual body," the director explains, "often it's dealt with as a problem, a questionable flesh, something to make one uncomfortable, a pleasure zone and an unknown terror zone."

*Nature's* opening segment *Sexual Techniques in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* comprises a variety of simulated sex acts. Mechanically performed, the droning sexual rhythm becomes an unsettling dirge. Although *Catscan*—a commentary on cunnilingus—uses the not so original concept of a feline as both licking perpetrator and eager recipient of human affection, purposeful ambiguity achieves the unease Handelman and collaborator Monte Cazazza desire. Close-ups, skewed perspectives and murky lighting fail to fully illuminate the action, leaving the viewer to wonder what evil lurks in the neighbor's closet.

Cazazza, a well-known performance artist linked to Survival Research Laboratories, and industrial bands Psychic TV and Throbbing Gristle, contributed two films to *Perverse Nature*. Genitalia-hell comes to mind as he punctures his penis in 1984's *Pierce*. Then, as he pokes at a simulated genital sore in *SXXX 80*, a millipede makes a playground of coconspirator Tana Emmolo-Smith's groomed vagina.

More direct—and immediately shocking—than her previous work, *A*

*History of Pain* is Handelman's first attempt at straight narrative. Form over function is not the rule in *Pain* which, according to press notes, is a 45-minute erotic black comedy about the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition." (The comedy remark must refer to shards of humor found in the second half.)

Handelman intertwines a docent-like tour of medieval instruments of torture with a play centered around the ominous "vaginal pear"—a

screw-driven speculum-like device used to make pussy paté—missing from its display case. By juxtaposing tales of mutilation with illustrations of humans ensconced in pronged, restrictive and pain-inducing apparatus, she creates a mood without resorting to the visual trickery of *Perverse Nature*. Towards the end, Handelman abandons this straight-ahead

format for a more contrived approach. Using disjointed dialogue and images flickering like Broadway neon, she draws a parallel between historical mistreatment of women and more oblique abuses endured today.

As the character Peel, Handelman plays out the "Look pretty but don't get pregnant" message relayed by some employers. A job application requires Peel to undergo a Corporation-sponsored medical examination. Decked out in lingerie with black-stockinged legs splayed from gynecological stirrups, Peel asks when she'll learn her test results as the doctor pokes and scrapes in a pap-smear nightmare. He denies her right to the information, saying it is only in the Corporation's interest that the tests are performed. Music by Psychic T.V., Cazzaza, Lustmord and Allegory Chapel

slams home Handelman's warning that the real torture to be feared is the stripping away of freedom. Mandatory drug-testing, anyone?

In a similarly socio-political frame of mind, Handelman pays homage to the female leather community with the entirely unscripted *Women on the Edge*. Without aligning herself with the group or their ideology, she vows solidarity saying, "I'd walk beside these women in a

capitalism, Handelman focuses on women "who don't want a piece of the capitalist, sperm-snaked pie and are creating their own world with their own rules."

Like many female filmmakers, Handelman too works within her own personal code, not bowing to the conventional wisdom of feminism: No newfangled spellings, no condemnation of men, no dodging nakedness, no subscribing to P.C. sexuality. Donning a

white wig and sunglasses, Handelman takes the wheel in a segment from Bay Area kinkographer Charles Gatewood's *Weird San Francisco* and recounts how she met a former lover in the bathroom of a junk party. The Spanish boy she had noticed earlier in the evening burst in, lifted her from the toilet seat and proceeded to rape her. Only it's wasn't rape

because she enjoyed it and their tormentation initiated a three-month relationship. The piece is poetry, not ironic considering it was as a mixed media performer that the director within revealed herself.

Spoken word, erotic dancing and visual projection combined to ignite a need to chronicle sex and pain in this Chicago native. A background in photography allowed Handelman to bring her vision to life by experimenting with film, emphasizing content over structure. But in discovering a passion for making movies, she hasn't forsaken other mediums. Susie Bright's anthology "Herotica 3," due out in spring, includes a piece contributed by Handelman who also has a supporting role in Lynn Hershman-Leeson's *Virtual Love*. Collaborative artwork with Monte Cazazza has already graced CD covers, and will be



The way Handelman prefers her men: naked, whipped and hungry.

March. I like any movement [or person] that slaps the system in the face...like Lydia Lunch and Susie Bright." Outspoken on women's issues, Handelman wants to celebrate womanhood in all its manifestations, not just the media-approved version.

"The women in my documentary aren't sexy chicks in black leather. Female sexuality co-opted by the media is never about big dykes, but big women are attractive to other women." Bound by more than a disdain for the policies of physical beauty, women interviewed in *Edge* express concern about the futures they've inherited as repressed non-conformists. Because traditional feminist dogma measures worth on the scale of

featured on the upcoming album from Japanese noise band C.C.C.C. In addition, a San Francisco gallery will be exhibiting the Handelman/Cazza photo-based installation entitled "Blood, Guts, and Beauty." Meanwhile, she's considering

scripts and raising capital for her next venture.

"People are helping me along. Ninety-five percent of getting grants is who you know," she says wearily. "It's still a tough fight for women, but we're getting more attention." And after a pause she adds, "It's disgusting that it's still an issue."

She's not alone in that lament—nor in her admiration of *The Piano's* Jane Campion.

Campion has won

did something relevant—really good—with it when she made *Heaven*." The other commercial icon warrants his spot for his contributions to independents by way of the Sundance Film Festival.

Eventually, Handelman hopes to be involved with commercially viable projects, but like her sisters behind the camera, scorns Hollywood—"it's only worth a few kicks and its stinky air." By no means a purist, she'd "be willing to do anything, if there was some profit." She hastens to add that "profit" doesn't necessarily mean financial compensation, citing Fellini as a personal hero who could never have existed in a film community concerned only with the bottom line.

"I'd much rather deal with British and European financiers who still appreciate the concept of auteur. Money is an enabler, greed a disabler...to me. Hollywood stands for greed. And as long as men have all the money, women are never going to be on top."

You can believe this woman plans to get there, but not by seizing the hand of a leering despot or waiting until the testosterone-heavy ladder topples. No. Packing an arsenal of wit, intellect, and audacity, she's ready to fight her way up—with exactly the same consideration she has always been shown.

"There should be a monthly women-only film magazine," she says responding to our FTVG special issue. "That would definitely encourage more women. Okay, we can have a few token guys...but before you know it, they'll be complaining that they want their own magazine." And perched comfortably on the uppermost rung, you can bet she'll let them have it.

## "The women in my documentary aren't sexy chicks in black leather."

—Michelle Handelman



Handelman with her tools of the trade: a dangerous pump-action shotgun, a dangerous dog and a dangerous attitude.

directors, Diane Keaton and Robert Redford provide unlikely company for Campion and the usual non-mainstream types like Abel Ferrara and Gus Van Sant producer Lori Parker. Says Handelman of Keaton, "Although she's caught up in the mindless scene, she took the money and

favor among femme filmmakers for doing what she believes in, without selling out. On Handelman's list of respected

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# SARAH JACOBSON'S



The wild and crazy Sarah Jacobson, poised for attack.

# BIG CAMERA

*Pissed off at the dumb things guys do, one woman finds revenge through the cathartic killings of a teenage sociopath.*

by Steven Chean

**W**hat was Sarah Jacobson doing for the last year and a half? Well, she definitely wasn't barefoot and pregnant, standing over a hot stove for the better part of the afternoon whippin' up dinner for hubby. Not quite. During that time, the 22-year-old director was busy perfecting a knack for filmmaking that is not only stylistically striking, but uncompromisingly coherent in its message. The result—the 27-minute short *I Was A Teenage Serial Killer*—follows the odyssey of Macy, a young lady, who

furious "at the dumb stuff guys do," goes on a rampage, killing men daring to objectify or betray her.

Shot in gritty 16mm, with frequent use of non-sync sound, *Teenage Serial Killer* is reminiscent of many B-movie greats—not surprising considering Jacobson's long-time affection for the highly-cool caliber of flicks. "Back in the winter of 1990 I was an intern at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and they'd show a lot of cheesy movies like *The XXX Fingers of Dr. T*, the original *Gun Crazy* and biker films," she says. "There's something exciting about them, a certain



Mary (Kristin Calabrese) is our misunderstood serial killer in search of an honest man. Spontaneity. They're sort of an open arena for experimentation."

It's obvious from *Serial Killer's* opening sequence Jacobson put her money where her mouth is. Experimenting with the juxtaposition of images and sounds, she literally throws the viewer into the action.

As a newscaster's voice-over reports that a man's body clothed in boxer shorts and boots was found beside the highway, extended close-up shots reveal Mary applying lipstick next to a blood-stained

"So it was really just one dumb thing after another that guys did that just pissed me off and I'd write a scene for it as we went along."

body. Snapshots of her and the future Mr. Rigor Mortis are interspersed while their previous conversation is revealed through voice-over: He's got a wife and kid, but they're just tying him down. He needs to be on the road, free from the ball and chain. The pieces fall together to tell the story.

And that's the beauty of Jacobson's style, she feeds the story in pieces—in an unusually complex assemblage of visual

and audio that forces the viewer to sort out the grisly events.

*Serial Killer's* opening is just a sample of the unconventional approach Jacobson takes when shooting the murders of one hapless victim after another. But sometimes, as she explains, creativity is the product of



necessity. "There were times when I wanted to shoot so badly and I couldn't wait for school to open to get my hands on the good equipment," she says. "So I used my Bolex and taped the sound on Pixelvision (the legendary Fisher Price videocam that records on cassette). I'd shoot the scene and then have the actors do it again for sound." The footage taken on the Bolex is gritty and frequently unsteady, while the sound is often non-sync and distorted. But the results actually work in the film's favor, giving it a documentary feel and sometimes even the comical effect of making the things the male characters say sound awfully monotone—although, I'm pretty sure, this was intended.

Actually, Jacobson's experimentation isn't confined to sight and sound, but spills over to her construction of the narrative. Due to her hectic schedule during the year-and-a-half-long shoot—five classes a

semester while working thirty hours a week—she was able to complete only about one scene per month. This on-again off-again regimen may seem like a good enough reason not to be able to write a working script, but it's not the only one. "During the breaks, when we weren't shooting, things would happen to me that just made me mad," she says, irritated.

"Guys I was dating or just guys I knew would do dumb things that really made me angry. I thought, 'Wait a minute, I make films. I'll put this in.' I didn't really have a pre-planned script, just an immediate need to get my anger out and the film was the perfect way. So it was really just one dumb thing after another guys did that just pissed me off and I'd write a scene for it as we went along."

Some exemplary scenes that reflect this narrative structure include Mary (played to psychotic

brilliance by Kristen Calabrese) killing one guy because, unbeknownst to her, he removes his condom during sex. "Oh, I don't really like them," is all he can say as she chokes the life out of him. She kills another, with d-Con mouse poison, simply because he tells her to make herself useful by finding a man and getting pregnant.

So, is *I Was A Teenage Serial Killer* another feminist attack on male attitudes toward women? "No, but guys always ask me that," Jacobson laughs. "This is an expression of my own anger at the way guys try to keep me down. It would be condescending for me to think that I could speak for all women. I mean, there are so many types, how could I? So it's not so much a 'feminist attack' where I'm





In *SERIAL KILLERS'* funniest sequence, Mary strangles her lover to death after finding he's removed his rubber during sex.

speaking for a group. I'm just telling an individual story and if other people relate to it then that's great.

Speaking about feminism, these days it's easy to align the attitude behind *I Was A Teenage Serial Killer* with a greater wave of political correctness. After all, the men portrayed as inconsiderate imbeciles throughout the film are products of, as one character puts it, a "white dominated male society." But don't be too quick to make the assumption Jacobson's jumped on a bandwagon.

PC is good in that it's given certain groups representation who never had it before. But, at the same time, it's still caught up in blaming other people and shutting them up," she says. "Shutting the other group up is a natural tendency of people. I mean, it's hard to accept diversity because there's always going to be some stuff that's offensive to you." Her personal philosophy is pretty simple: "Everyone has the right to do what they want to do and criticize what they want to criticize. No one has the right to hold anyone back."

*Teenage Serial Killer* holds back very little; but there is more to this film than therapeutic venting of anger. According to Jacobson, it is an attempt to integrate her voice into society—a society she feels is portrayed unrealistically in most films. "In a lot of films, women are portrayed as passive and non-confrontational," she says. "Men are usually the ones in the middle of things, causing things to happen. Women are sort of peripheral. I mean, that's just not realistic. Personally, I'm loud and aggressive and I never see that type of woman on the screen, except when she's portrayed as a bitch. I tried to make a female lead character who's confrontational and says what she wants."

Being smart, aggressive and, yes, even a

good filmmaker doesn't guarantee a woman the respect she might deserve in film school. "When I was a freshman at Bard I was taking film production classes which were usually saved for students who are at least sophomores. I even taught some seniors how to run some of the equipment," she says, but the equipment manager at the San Francisco Art Institute would have wagered that she couldn't even start up a moviola (editing board). Then there was the self-proclaimed feminist film teacher who asked her who shot her film. "On the whole, men [at SFAI] do things on their own and get more respect from their fellow students and their teachers...even the equipment people. I guess they assume that a woman can't do the things men do."

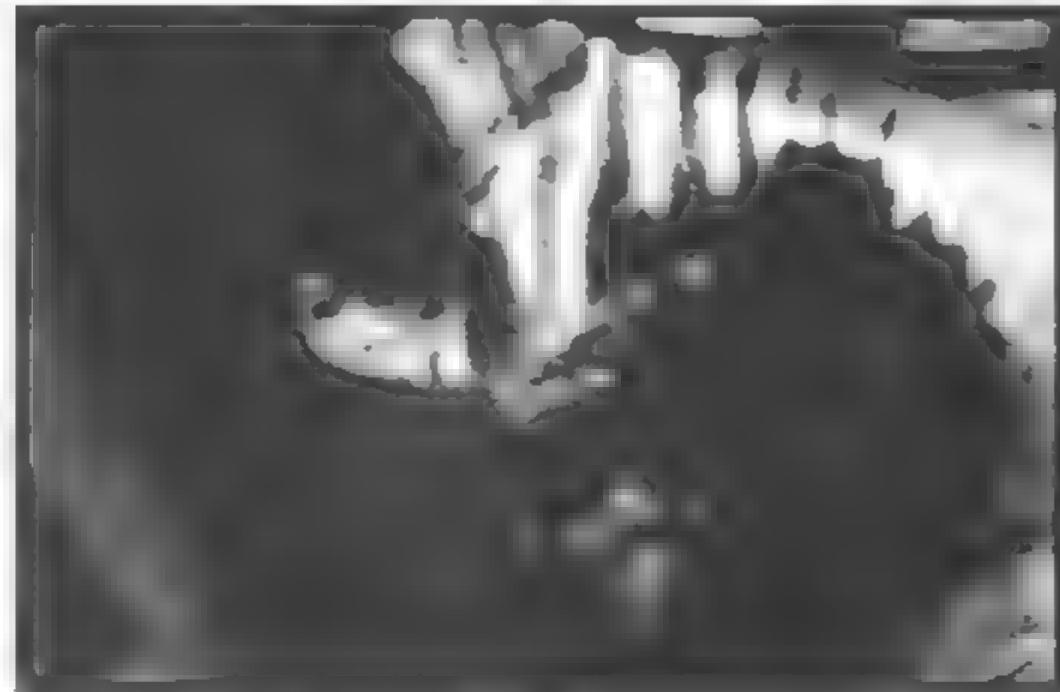
That's not to say there haven't been some (well, maybe a couple) teachers who have believed in her ability. One of them is George Kuchar. "He's the first teacher who treated me like I was important. He believed in me and supported what I

wanted to do."

As disheartening as this lack of support from most of her faculty and fellow students must be, for Jacobson it is offset by the feeling she gets when she's directing. "When I'm making a film, I'm in control. I tell people what to do. I like the power. People get really scared when they see a woman behind a big camera." Behind a big camera Jacobson's clearly not looked upon as a "woman"—passive, quiet and inconsequential. In fact, from that position, she's not looked upon at all. She does the looking, the judging and the decision-making. By choosing to be behind the camera, she's not retreating. Quite the contrary. She's clearing her throat, opening her mouth and preparing to charge.

So far as strategy is concerned, what's next for a woman who's said so much, yet has clearly just begun? "I'm working on a film I'm planning to call *Sex At The Movies*. It's a coming-of-age story about a young girl discovering her sexuality." In addition, Jacobson's started a comic book called *Hardcore* (see *In Print* review this issue) featuring the work of 24 San Francisco artists.

"People get really scared when they see a woman behind a big camera."



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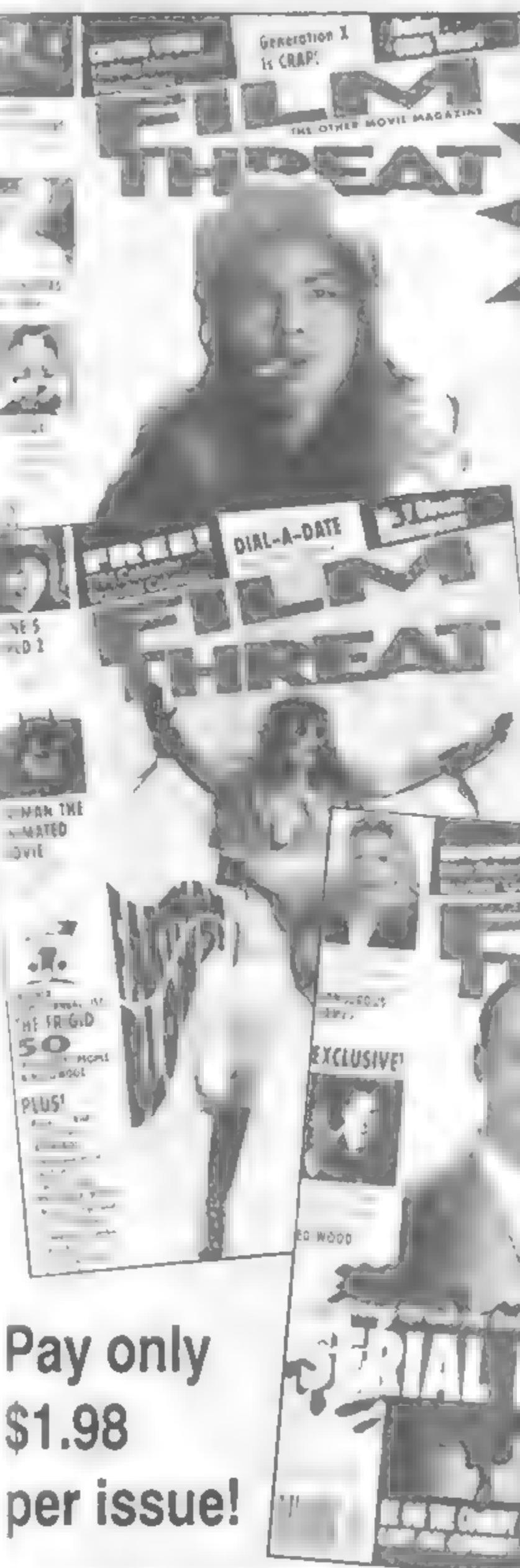
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Maybe he HATES feminists. Maybe he's been screwed over by one "liberated" bitch too many...



And if he's a psycho killer rapist and he thinks I'm a FEMINIST then hell probably KILL me...



-and LATER hell say that I led him on because I PICKED him up in this coffee shop...



Those FEMINISTS have screwed it up for EVERYBODY!!!



# EXPLOITATION MADE (AWFULLY) EASY

*Hey, aren't the freewheeling days of the 1980s over? A time when any piece of trite, derivative crap laid down on videotape could weasel its way into a rental store? Well, yes they are—which leaves a film like *Alien Vows* in sad trouble. (And the filmmakers really pissed off at yours truly.)*

by David E. Williams

It's not too often that someone whose film gets slagged in our review section will take the time (or have the guts) to actually write a letter about how cheated they feel. You know the drill: "My movie was better than that, I deserved at least a 2 rating!" (For a sad illustration, see this issue's Mail Bag section.) So you can imagine my shock when Arizona-based filmmaker Mike Ricks confronted me after I merely alluded to his recently completed film *Alien Vows* in last issue's Editorial—

MAYBE THE SUN GOT TO HIM?  
Above: Hot-headed director Mike Ricks in happier days with his rubbery *Alien Vows* antagonist. Right: Rachel Sissows puts the final touches on the David Ayres creation.

simply using it as an illustration of a case in which overzealous filmmakers overcompensated for their lack of storytelling skills with often unnecessary or redundant technical junk. You know the story: "I mixed my soundtrack on digital 24-track tape...I did my final edit on D2—I'm using state of the art technology." Yeah, usually to tell the same creaky old story we've seen a million times before. Well, I didn't even use Ricks' name or the title of his flick, *Alien Vows*,

in the piece. I simply alluded to it. But I guess that was enough for him to arrive on my doorstep husting and puffing, all red-faced and ready to clock me with the slightest provocation. Fortunately, I didn't give it to him—but what I can offer is a fair and honest review (not written by me) of the film that nearly brought me to blows (which isn't the first time). Good luck Mike! (But keep one hand on the Xanax—for those anxious moments.)

—DEW



## ALIEN Vows

82 min/Super 8

Sunstone Pictures



We've all seen this movie before. Back in the 1950s, the studios churned out hokey, melodramatic science fiction chillers (Such as *Invasion of The Saucermen* perhaps?) just like this one about aliens taking over the earth, mating with our women (or more like Corman's *Humanoids From The Deep?*), etc. by the dozens. We need only to go to any decent video store to dig up the ancestors of this film. So, if we can rent any one of a multitude of virtually identical films, the question is: Why was *Alien Vows* made?

The only possible answer seems to be that director Mike Ricks has apparently set out to make an updated version (i.e. with more skin and gore) of the classic sci-fi thrillers of yesteryear—hoping to cash in on a tried and true genre. Given that any film costs a hefty chunk of change to produce, even a Super 8 feature like *Vows*, no one can fault the folks at Sunstone Pictures for their strategy. The problem is, just as a paint-by-numbers landscape has all the pizazz of a flat Coke®, so does any movie that so slavishly sticks to the formula as does *Vows*. Think of it as meat loaf—an old standby—made without the meat. Or the reliable macaroni and cheese sans the crunchy stuff on top.

There is truly nothing original in all of this film's 82 tediously familiar minutes. It's a pure rehash of countless other clones and retreads and entirely too predictable. Here's the bachelor party scene with a stripper, here's the gratuitous heroine-taking-a-shower scene, here's the dramatic final fight between the alien invaders and (Yawn...) the pathetic earthlings, etc., etc., etc... Even with the lack of originality aside, there is a multitude of gaping plot holes, sketchy acting, atrocious special effects, tensionless "scares" and just poorly



How Ricks achieved those no-so-stunning spaceship effects

thought-out scenes that don't warrant careful scrutiny.

To give credit where credit is due, one has to notice that Ricks and Co. managed to at least complete a cohesive and comprehensive feature-length movie on film—and that alone counts for something. As does the fact that, technically, everything's fine. The movie looks and sounds okay, the editing's fine and so is (Yeah, alright) some of the acting. (Special kudos to the perpetually sneering Don Luna as Bill, the loving fiancee turned menacingly evil alien husband.) All the pieces are there, but the film has no life of its own, no charm, no sense of humor about itself or its genre, and—most importantly—no originality.

—Merle Bertrand

*It was later reported that Ricks had spent the previous day locked in negotiations with a distributor who*

**"All the pieces are there, but the film has no life of its own, no charm, no sense of humor about itself or its genre, and—most importantly—no originality."**

### The gist of ALIEN Vows

*ultimately rejected his stale turkey, entitled (just to keep the record clear) ALIEN VOWS. I suppose that might explain why I became such a tasty target for his anger—he was looking to pin his failure on me. You know, Mike, projecting your problems on other people isn't a healthy way to go through life so lighten up.*



Actress Rebecca Moore is one of *ALIEN Vows'* few production values.

# HATE IT GG ALLIN & THE MURDER JUNKIES

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—GG Allin

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# CAPITOL

# B



by David E. Williams

photo: Richard Kora

# *While most movies keep getting bigger and bigger, NYC underground icon BETH B moves inward with her study in intimate power-tripping, Two Small Bodies.*

**B**y most standards, multimedia artist and filmmaker Beth B has had an unusual career. Though self-taught through moneyless trial and error, as were most of her *Village Voice*-dubbed "New Cinema" peers, her directorial skills were more quickly focused, and in a more ominous fashion, than one might expect from an admitted novice.

"Those initial films really had to do with aspects of life I was experiencing, combining documentary, experimental and narrative techniques together," says B of her early work. "But that was how I learned to make films, by going out on the streets and shooting. There was a certain sensibility of the '70s—just go do it."

Reported entrenched *Voice* mouthpiece J. Hoberman at the time, "Their populist rhetoric has a '60s ring as well: 'I want to make films that people will see and that won't get stuck in some independent film art house,' says one. 'I'm thinking of drive-ins, rock clubs, prison and television.'

Yeah, and that particular cultural rebel was probably also thinking "Jeez, I hope I don't just end up as a pathetic wannabe like so many of my loser friends."

Fortunately, then teamed with husband/coconspirator Scott B (nee Billingsly), Beth did not

Shunning the structuralist "art for art's sake" tendencies

*"I think a lot about torture, about having my nails ripped out one by one. I wonder if I'll be able to hold out until I'm unconscious. I think a lot about torture..."*

*—Beth B in Letters to Dad (1979), reading a note sent to Rev. Jim Jones by a dedicated disciple*

of the self-proclaimed avant-garde, the B's work instead mirrored the campy B movies that might have played in some 12th Street grind house. Like the film noir classics of the '40s, the B's first collaborations, *Black Box* (1978) and *The Offenders* (1979), reflected the then-legitimately punk scene in New York's nihilistic Lower East Side—and the perception of a burgeoning police state brought about by the Reagan Administration. Interrogation, torture and manipulation were the themes of the day, with America closely resembling one of the repressive south-of-the-border dictatorships *el Presidente* alternately attacked and propped up. The B's feature-length finale occurred with the 1983 completion of *Vortex*, an \$80,000 budgeted New Wave noir featuring boxer Lydia Lunch, artist Bill Rice and

future Abel Ferrara star James Russo

*Vortex*'s plot revolves around an agoraphobic, Perot-like political puppet (Rice) whose GQ master (Russo) has compelled him to order the assassination of a troublesome congressman. Enter Angel Powers, a Botticelli-like detective (Lunch) bent on wallowing through the spiraling scum of Washington to solve the crime while popping off pithy Hammett-like one liners.

Beth's post-Scott work, highlighted by her first 35mm feature,



Fred Ward and Suzy Amis star in B's TWO SMALL BODIES.



Images at odds: innocent beauty and violent agony are constant factors in Beth B's filmography.  
(L) from *BELLADONNA* (1989) and (R) a shot between the eyes in *THE OFFENDERS* (1979).

*Saltation!* (1987), which foreshadowed the "righteous" shenanigans of Jim and Tammy Faye, and video projects—*Belladonna* (1989), *Stigmata* (1991) and *Thanatopsis* (1991)—investigated other universal oppressors such as religion, drugs and war.

"My love for movies stemmed from the idea of unresolved endings and questions which will provoke people to react in some way," explains B, and as evidenced by *Two Small Bodies*, her latest foray into the feature format, little for her has changed over the last decade—except that power struggles and sexual antagonism in the '90s have become even less defined. Now the powerful not only want to subjugate but also desperately want to be victimized themselves, perhaps better serving her desire for narrative chaos.

Like *Vortex* (1983), B's satire on pulp detective novels and James Bondish intrigue, *Two Small Bodies*, based on the play by coscriptor Neal Bell and funded by German television, offers a hard-boiled, fedora-sporting brute with a badge. Lieutenant Brann (Fred The Player Ward) sounds like he's been boning up on his Mickey Spillane. But unlike the military-industrial-complex McGuffin of her earlier film, *Bodies* is driven by the hideously

timely device of child abduction and murder. Brann, an increasingly bad lieutenant, begins his investigation at first suspecting, then harassing and finally viciously persecuting the children's mother, Eileen Maloney (*Suzzy The Ballad of Little Jo Amis*).

Because Eileen is (A) divorced and (B) works in a strip bar, Brann has immediate assumptions about her. "He comes in the door thinking she's a slut, whore, terrible mother and the scum of the earth because she is rebelling against everything he is trying to protect as a cop," summarizes B. She's on a trip toward independence, the one thing that completely threatens his machismo and traditional role with his

wife—the social status quo." Of course, her flat statement that she is "better off without [the children]" only serves to inflame Brann's passions.

"I'm consistently attracted to investigations of institutional and domestic power," continues B, "because when those situations are left unspoken, they lead to violence." And for Lieutenant Brann, it's a direct path. Challenging Eileen's story about the children's disappearance, he reveals not only his need to dominate her mentally in the effort to coerce a confession, but sexually, lewdly offering himself up as the kind of man she needs—ultimately abandoning the kidnapping except as an instrument of access and manipulation.

The erotic relationship that develops between these two people is in a sense explored at the expense of the children," says B. "And that's what I love about the story itself, the perverse idea that these children are just a device."

And perverse it is, as Brann threatens assault and then dares his victim to assault him, thusly still giving in to his desires. Eileen, at once tortured and fascinated, reacts by transforming from boyish eunuch to black minidress-clad sexpot and back again—retreating and advancing

**"That's what I love about the story itself, the perverse idea that these children are just a device."**

—Beth B on using dead kids as a McGuffin

according to Brann's own emotional ebbs and flows. Says B, "He wants to fucking break her down, and that's the only way a lot of men can deal with powerful women. Because if he can conquer her sexually, she will submit to his power." But in what proves to be the most provocative sequence in the minimalist *Bodies*, after the detective has confronted his suspect with a stark Polaroid of her strangled children, Brann makes his final assault on Eileen's psyche and compels her to tearfully confess that she did indeed commit the heinous crime.

"A lot of people will dwell on the issue of guilt, but Brann came into this having prejudged her. He's already found her guilty, so that isn't specifically the focus of this film," says B. "We don't have to be so black-and-white and can reveal the emotions that create such situations. The film ultimately is about how these two people wish their own parents had treated them, in being honest about themselves—and only by going through this ordeal could they see how."

And *Bodies* is an ordeal—sometimes in the "highly paid dominatrix" sense, though often in the negative.

Oddly, while talented costars Ward and Amis get alternately weepy, creepy and cary, they somehow lack the legitimate weirdness inherent in the players in B's earlier films. Frankly, the likes of Lydia Lunch, Exene Cervenka and John Lurie carry the perfect adulterous baggage necessary to stand out in bizarre circumstances. It simply is there—while these two fine actors have to call upon their respective muses with all the fury they can muster just to make us believe they can even begin to be as twisted as their characters.

Remarking on Harvey Keitel's performance in *Reservoir Dogs*, Quentin Tarantino stated that the ex-Marine was one of the few actors in Hollywood who was legitimately tough. Keitel didn't have to waste five seconds of screen time to get that across. He simply is. Meanwhile, Ward, seemingly compelled to adopt Keitel's literal soul-baring techniques, takes half of *Bodies'* running time to convince us of this point.

Amis fares better, her character instantly reversing roles on her badge-wearing aggressor by transforming from scathingly guilty mother to tormenting

"He wants to fucking break her down, and that's the only way a lot of men can deal with powerful women. Because if he can conquer her sexually, she will submit to his power."

—Beth B on Lt. Brann in *Two Small Bodies*

seductress in sometimes sudden, often fluid moments of flux like some sorry and sexy Sybil. But there is a "total innocent" or "complete slut" element missing from the mix. And while the purity may be hard to find elsewhere in Beth B's filmography, Lunch's inherent cruelty still lingers from the ancient Lower East Side likes of *Black Box*—invisibly upstaging Amis in some scenes from almost 15 years away.

If anything, *Two Small Bodies* lacks the dangerous, "anything can happen" atmosphere of those early films, which seemingly depended more upon the explosive chemistry of genuine personalities and near-eccentric situations than good acting and strong filmmaking techniques. We know this is a movie, whereas it hasn't been such a certain thing in the past. (TM)



A parable for the torture practices of various South American dictatorships, Beth and Scott B's *Black Box* is not only painful to watch, featuring plenty of sadistic action, but also to hear; as skull-shattering feedback effects fill the soundtrack. (R) Lydia Lunch and Bob Mason.



**SHAMELESS PLUG!**

# AMERICA'S SLEAZIEST HOME VIDEOS

*Setting her sights on a late-night slot as TV's only TV\* talk host, Fertile La Toyah Jackson reveals secrets about everybody's brother but her own.*

\*transvestite

by Steven Chean



The impossibly fertile La Toyah Jackson.

**HARD COPY AND A Current Affair** are just two of TV's numerous news magazines claiming to be the one-stop-shopping-source for the kind of information Americans can't live without—news that touches the very core of our existence. Consider how *A Current Affair* covered in grisly detail the Lorena Bobbitt fiasco. No sooner had she severed her husband's penis, tossing it casually from a moving vehicle and leaving it limp and lifeless on a lonely Virginia roadside, when Steve Dunleavy-wannabe Allan Lee Miller appeared. Relentlessly pursuing truth and accuracy, Miller provided viewers with a blow-by-blow account of the events unfolding, demonstrating the crack journalistic skills so respected by his media colleagues and the public. Mr. Miller is but one in that class of reporters selected by the tabloid-news brain trust responsible for bringing us this fabulously high standard of broadcast journalism.

As significant as these shows are, America, there's a new face in the world of television news magazines, one that will escalate informative programming to yet a higher echelon. That trendsetting newscaster is Fertile La Toyah Jackson. In

*Fertile La Toyah Jackson Video Magazine #2: The Kinky Issue*, however, she gets the skinny on hot topics those other guys are afraid to touch. Fertile La Toyah was on the scene when G.G. Allin and the Murder Junkies attempted to enlighten an eager audience with uplifting lyrics and enchanting harmonies at the Hong Kong Cafe in downtown Los Angeles. When Mistress Barb of the Duchess de Sade wouldn't loan her equipment to the Duke de Defecation, *Hard Copy* wasn't around to film the ensuing riot. But director Rick Castro and the Fertile La Toyah crew captured on video each poetic epithet hurled from the mouth of perhaps the most beloved man in the world (excluding, of course, Pope John Paul II). When Ron Athey, "the tattooed love god," mummified his boyfriend Robert and pierced

various parts of his honey's body, Fertile La Toyah producer and correspondent Vaginal Davis documented the important goings-on. And where was *A Current Affair*? Out chasing Michael Jackson probably. As an added bonus, Davis scooped on Ron Athey being crucified in a special ceremony and piercing himself afterward while dancing to the rhythm of

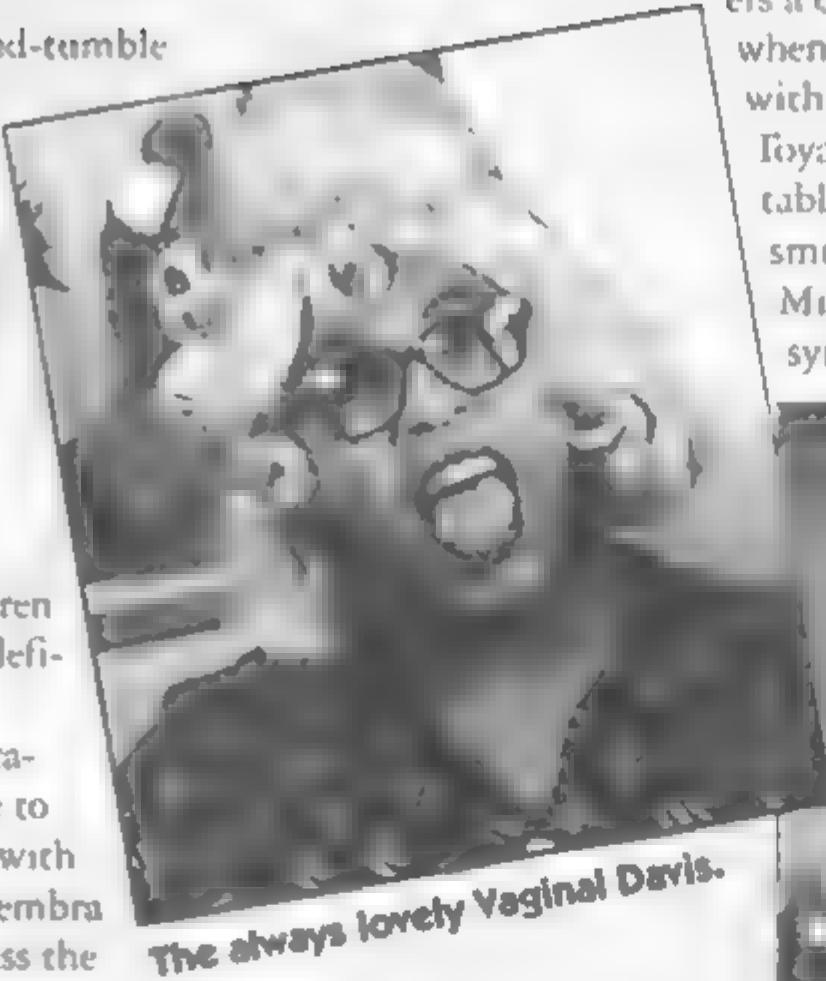
ongo drums

Listen, in the rough-and-tumble profession of journalism, a day's work isn't over until the job is done. Fertile La Toyah and her crew live by this motto and you can bet they don't sleep when there's news to be had. And when those spunky up-and-comers The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black play a gig, there's definitely news to be had. Vaginal Davis goes on location once again, this time to spend some quality time with nasty-faced lead singer Kembra Pfahler. While they discuss the reverent young lady's psychic relationship with the multi-talented diva for whom the band is named, the gals find a few moments to exorcise a few of Kembra's most troublesome demons—the Salem Witch trials, among others.

Obviously, *Fertile La Toyah Jackson Video Magazine #2: The Kinky Issue* is an undertaking of great scope and depth. For this reason, it is difficult—nay, impossible—to give read-

ers a comprehensive description of what's in store for them when they pop this winner into their VCR. Suffice it to say, with the masterful directorial guidance of Castro, La Toyah and her dolled-up crew force the boundaries of tabloid-grade news by scanning uncharted horizons of smut. So, Rafael Abramowitz, Steve Dunleavy, Allan Lee Miller and all you other guys and gals at those big-time syndicated news magazine programs, take heed. Over

your shoulder looms a large transvestite wielding a shaky video cam. And she's ripe and ready to use it.



The always lovely Vaginal Davis.



Yes, La Toyah does get kinky.

dark side of *The Force* and accepted a job at our crosstown rival, Movieline. While he is now slaving for menial wages and has absolutely no prospect of actually writing any articles, Steven probably made the best decision he possibly could. We wish him good luck in living with it. **DIX**



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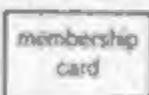
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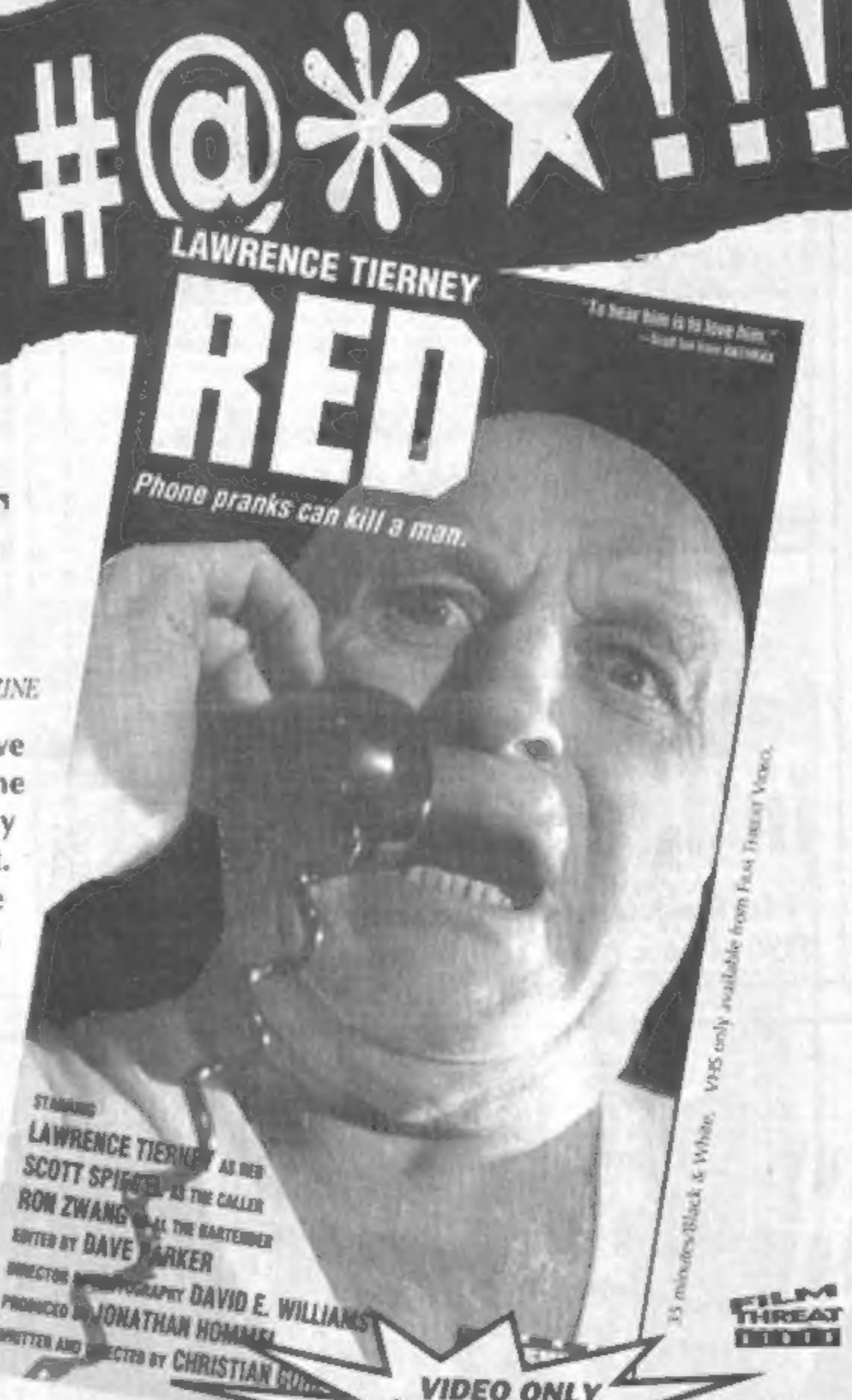
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